

Saturday June 8 1996

Abu Dhabi D3.57	Spain King 100.25	Denmark CR 1.00
Amman D3.57	Switzerland 1.50	Poland R 7.00
Antwerp D3.57	Italy 1.50	Portugal 2.50
Beijing D3.57	Japan 1.50	Portugal F 2.00
Bombay D3.57	UK 1.50	Spain CR 1.50
Buenos Aires D3.57	USA 1.50	Spain US 2.00
Calcutta D3.57	Canada 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Chennai D3.57	France 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Colombo D3.57	Germany 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Dhaka D3.57	India 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Dublin D3.57	Japan 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Geneva D3.57	South Africa 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Hong Kong D3.57	Sweden 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
London D3.57	Switzerland 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Los Angeles D3.57	Taiwan 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Madrid D3.57	Thailand 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Mumbai D3.57	Turkey 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
New York D3.57	USA 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Osaka D3.57	UK 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Paris D3.57	USA 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Perth D3.57	USA 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Rangoon D3.57	USA 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Seoul D3.57	USA 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Singapore D3.57	USA 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Tokyo D3.57	USA 1.50	Spain AR 1.50
Yokohama D3.57	USA 1.50	Spain AR 1.50

The Guardian INTERNATIONAL
NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

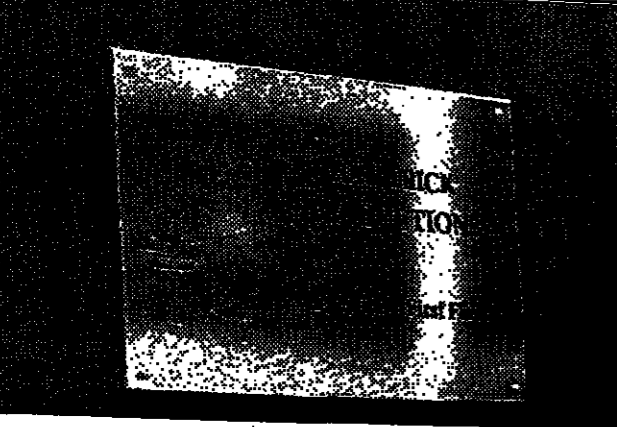
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David Lacey on football's main event
Euro 96
Kick-off

David Hearst on the campaign to buy victory
Yeltsin, the last Tsar
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Melvyn Bragg on why television needs to look back
Outlook page 19

BBC inquiry into funding of top shows



Hat Trick's headquarters in the West End of London
Television company producing comedy programme Have I Got News For You faces questions on handling of cost-savings after Guardian investigation



Denise O'Donoghue... invited BBC to audit company's books



Jimmy Mulville... creative genius behind Hat Trick

Patrick Donovan
City Editor

THE BBC has launched an urgent inquiry into the corporation's financial relationship with Hat Trick Productions, one of Britain's most prestigious independent television companies, which makes a string of successful shows, including *Have I Got News For You* and *Drop the Dead Donkey*.

The move comes at a sensitive time for the BBC, which is still smarting from highly embarrassing allegations that one of its senior executives received a personal loan from an independent production company. There is no suggestion that Hat Trick is implicated.

A spokeswoman said: "You have put several serious allegations to us about Hat Trick's financial management of a BBC-commissioned series, which of course we are raising with them."

money between programmes without authority.

Other directors include Jimmy Mulville, regarded as the creative genius behind the company, Mary Bell and Geoffrey Perkins. They shared salaries of £705,450 for the last financial year. The company last year made pre-tax profits of £403,703, according to latest accounts filed in Companies House.

The BBC pays Hat Trick around £1.2 million a series for *Have I Got News For You*, the satirical game show which is one of the company's most successful productions.

Hat Trick pays huge sums for top stars to appear on the show, although they are contracted for appearances and have no involvement in the running of the company or its financial affairs.

It is understood that its host, Angus Deayton, earns £12,100 per show together with a weekly "exclusivity" bonus of £4,250. The editor of *Private Eye*, Ian Hislop, also earns a flat programme fee of £12,100, taking his series earnings to £98,800.

Other perks include individual clothing allowances of £4,500. Other popular programmes made by Hat Trick include Channel 4's *Clive Anderson Talks Back*, which pays the former lawyer £27,500 per programme with individual appearance fees of £5,000 for designated "extra special guests".

There is no suggestion that Mr Deayton or any of the other artists employed by Hat Trick are either aware of or involved in the inquiries.

Apart from these expensive overheads, however, BBC accountants are understood to be keen to satisfy themselves that other budget expenses were justified.

Examples include:

- Claims for an extra £105-per-person bonus for ordinary production staff for bank holiday working, which has not been generally paid on the series. It is understood that although Hat Trick was fully refunded for one cancelled programme in the last series of *Have I Got News For You*, some freelance staff never received money owing.
- Other claims in the programme budget for the current series include provisions for "voice-over sessions" and "extras" which are not generally used in the making of the series.
- An examination over whether fixed overhead costs, payments due to staff which were budgeted for commissioned programmes were fully justified. According to a letter sent to the independent finance manager of the BBC, Jane Plackett on February 20, Hat Trick includes Richard Osman as one of the programme's writers on *Have I Got News For You* for a daily fee of £250, contracted to work two days a week.

However, Mr Osman does not work in the programme's office and it has been established that he is not a regular writer for the show, concentrating on other Hat Trick work. There is no suggestion that Mr Osman has any knowledge of how his salary originates.

IRA holds crucial ceasefire talks

David Sherrock, Durcan Campbell and Richard Norton-Taylor

THE IRA leadership will be making crucial decisions this weekend about if and when to call a new ceasefire after issuing its third statement to confirm it was studying the proposed agenda for talks.

The move is in response to concerted pressure from London, Dublin and, crucially, Washington. A further statement will be issued in the next 48 hours.

Yesterday's statement coincided with the arrest of five men in connection with the Canary Wharf bombing, which ended the previous ceasefire. Last night, the men were being held for questioning under the Prevention of Terrorism Act at Paddington Green police station, London. Four were arrested in South Armagh and flown to the mainland. The fifth was arrested in Barking, east London.

In a separate statement, the IRA denied any involvement in a bungled postal van raid yesterday in which an Irish policeman was murdered and another seriously injured. Eyewitnesses said men dressed in paramilitary garb



Waiting for the whistle... Tom Gorm-Peterson, from Denmark, with British and Swiss flags in a north London street yesterday

After Merrie England carnival, Euro 96 kicks off with not-so-merry claims that a Nazi invention is being resurrected

John Duncan
Sports Correspondent

TWO years of planning, £18 million to stage, 297 complaints about tickets, 159 hooliganic panic stories and 284 assorted denials by the Football Association, and Euro 96 can finally get down to the football at Wembley today.

Well not quite. First there is an opening ceremony to be got through before England kick off against Switzerland. The Merrie England carnival is followed by St George and the Dragon and then Gerald Naprous and the Devil's Horsemen present their much acclaimed Medieval Knights routine.

The history of football in 20 minutes starts with a Middle Ages free-for-all - something that we may see again the following Saturday when Scotland come to Wembley - and a re-creation of the first international, a 0-0 draw between Scotland and England in 1872, a result that both will be hoping to avoid next week.

However, there was one last tangle to be sorted out by the organisers yesterday when the German-based International Federation of Football History and Statistics said UEFA's "golden goal" rule for deciding drawn matches was a golden own goal - a Nazi invention that should not be used. The rule says that drawn games in the second round will be won by whichever team scores first in extra time.

"It is a mockery to re-name this Nazi invention a golden goal," the federation president Alfredo Pece said yesterday. "You can't glorify something the Nazis introduced. It is totally discredited. It leaves a bitter taste in the mouth to see Fifa and Uefa taking over this rule invented by the German fascists."

He said soccer's world governing body Fifa claimed that "sudden death" was first

LIFE'S A LOTTERY

When you buy a lottery ticket, you've a one in 14 million chance of winning the jackpot. The chances that you may experience some form of rheumatic disease are rather greater.

As many people in Britain today know, arthritis can cause severe crippling joint damage to hands and wrists. Feet, knees, hips, shoulders, elbows, jaw and neck can also be affected causing unrelenting pain and disability.

The Arthritis and Rheumatism Council is the only major UK charity financing medical research into osteoarthritis and rheumatic diseases at most university hospitals and medical schools in the UK.

Unlike the lottery, successful research programmes aren't dependent on chance. We need your help to increase our odds of finding a cure for these destructive diseases.

Please send me: **Your FREE Information Pack**
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Birt heads BBC shake-up

Andrew Cuff
Media Correspondent

John Birt is to remain as the BBC's director general for a further four years to oversee a radical restructuring of the corporation. It was announced yesterday.

Staff reacted with alarm at the prospect of another prolonged period of managerial upheaval, while critics warned that the BBC was downgrading its domestic radio services, imperilling the World Service and preparing for widespread job cuts.

John Tusa, a former head of the BBC World Service, said the changes could result in an expansion of bureaucracy instead of the hoped-for streamlining of the corporation.

Sir Christopher Bland, the BBC's chairman, and Mr Birt insisted radio was not being relegated in importance in the changes, which mean responsibility for commissioning and scheduling television and radio services is to be combined into one directorate. Radio is to lose its individual voice at board of management level. Matthew Bannister, controller of Radio 1, is to become director of radio.

Mr Birt, whose term as the £285,000-a-year head of the corporation was due to expire at the end of 1987, has agreed to stay until the year 2000.

His management blueprint — the second shake-up he has presided over in three years — is designed to prepare the BBC for the launch of digital services.

Jocelyn Hay, chairman of the Voice of the Listener and Viewer pressure group, said: "We are extremely worried about the future of radio. It is a significant diminution of the importance of radio and it has lost its place at the top

table of management."

Mr Birt denied that the departure four months ago of Liz Forgan, as managing director of network radio, was due to the impending shake-up. But insiders believe she had feared radio was losing its clout in the BBC hierarchy.

Mr Tusa, who ran the World Service until 1982, said the reorganisation was "excessively rigid". Responding to a suggestion that BBC Worldwide chief executive Bob Phillips and World Service managing director Sam Younger did not know of the changes until two days ago, he said on World Service's Newshour programme: "If there wasn't a consultation process I think that shows this was a short of putsch against the World Service."

The World Service will have to commission its programmes from the domestic BBC Production and BBC News directorates. Mr Tusa said: "This is a bad, bad day for the World Service."

The main broadcasting unions, Bectu, the NUJ and ABEU, said the restructuring would create a further period of upheaval for BBC staff.

Mr Birt insisted the changes were focused on the main task of providing the best service for licence fee payers. "By bringing together all production and separating it from scheduling and commissioning, we are creating the world's largest broadcasting production powerhouse."

He refused to be specific about job cuts under the new structure, to be implemented by April 1987. Since 1983, 5,000 posts have gone. The cost of programme making had to be reduced by 20 per cent in the next 10 years, Mr Birt said.

He added: "Obviously this is another major change. People will take time to accustom themselves to lots of people who will feel nervous about it."



John Birt... is to remain as the BBC's director general and will oversee 'the creation of the world's largest broadcasting production powerhouse'

Savings sought to fund a new broadcast vision

BBC staff were stunned by the scale of the planned reorganisation and surprised by the timing. The reorganisation was agreed this week by chairman Sir Christopher Bland and the BBC's governors, but the blueprint bore the imprimatur of John Birt.

Although viewers and listeners will initially notice little change, the changes mean a significant shuffling of the BBC's top executives. The restructuring will have to deliver substantial economies if the BBC is to launch new digital services.

The BBC will have six key elements:

- **BBC Broadcast:** It will commission and schedule services and channels to audiences at home and abroad for television, radio and multi-media, under chief executive Will Wyatt. The directorate will include director of radio Matthew Bannister and a director of television. Regional broadcasting, education and new digital commercial services will all come under Mr Wyatt's umbrella.
- **BBC Production:** The directorate, under chief executive Tony Hall, Richard Ayre, controller of editorial policy, will become deputy director after the departure of deputy director Eric Bowman.

Jenny Abramsky, controller of Radio 5 Live, becomes head of continuous news services, including the planned 24-hour digital news service, and making programmes under contract for BBC World, the international news channel. A new controller is to be recruited for 5 Live. BBC News will also be commissioned to make English language news services for World Service radio.

□ **BBC Resources:** This directorate, under chief executive Rod Lynch, will continue to provide broadcast resources for all BBC programmes. For the first time it will provide resources and services on contract to World Service radio.

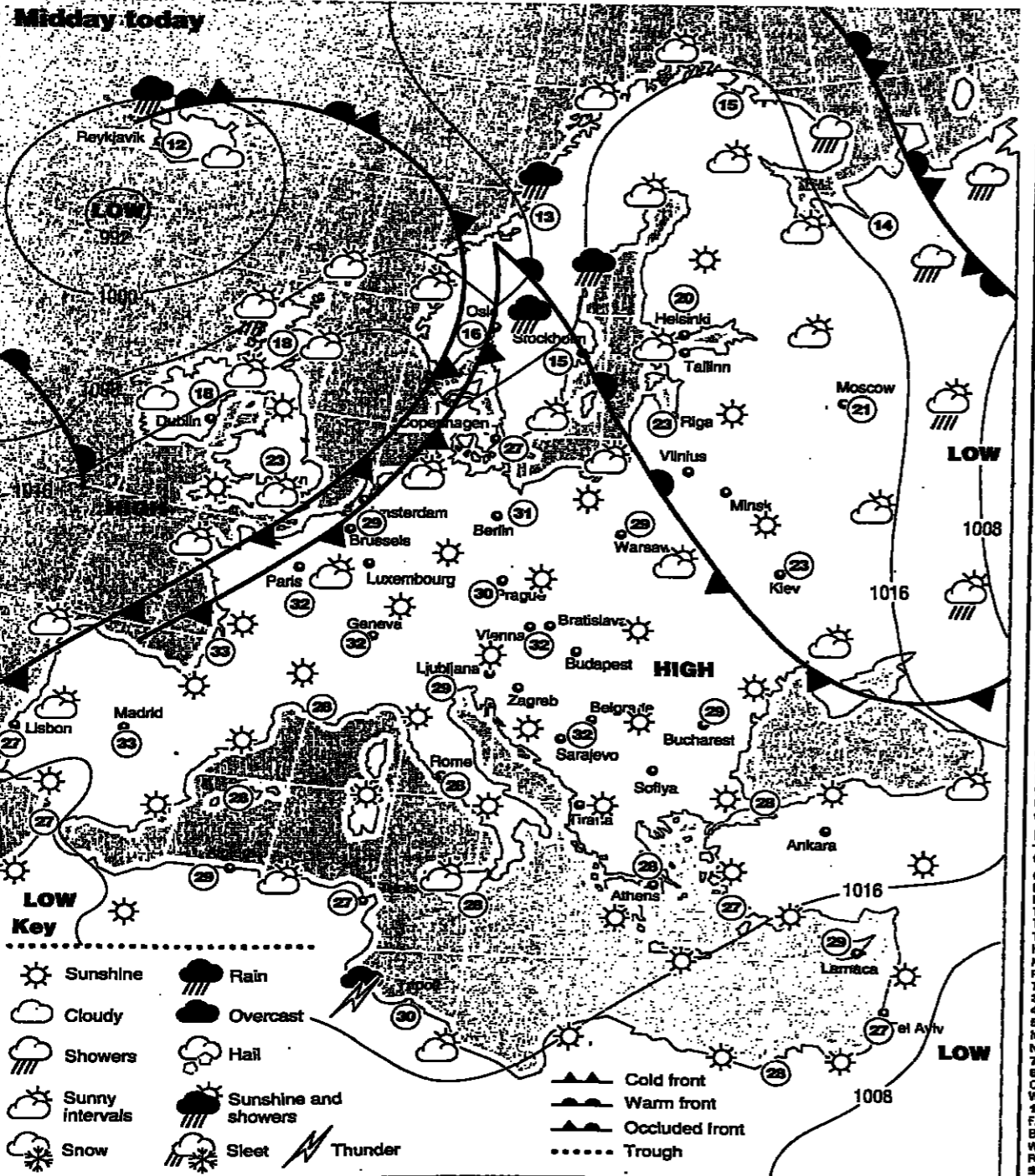
□ **BBC Worldwide:** Under chief executive Bob Phillips, who is also the BBC's deputy director general, it will continue to be responsible for the marketing, sales and distribution of BBC output. Direct financial management of BBC World and BBC Prime will be contracted to the BBC News and BBC Broadcast directorates. World Service radio will continue to commission its output and be responsible entirely for foreign language services.

□ **Corporate Centre:** Personnel, corporate affairs, finance and information technology, and policy and planning remain in this directorate.

Mr Birt said the new structure was planned in 1983 and he took over as director general but was too complicated to introduce in one step.

He said savings from the streamlining would finance the BBC's vision of digital television. The corporation is planning a joint production of BBC1 and BBC2 in widescreen format and a range of multi-media products and services.

The weather in Europe



Forecast for the cities

City	Temp	Wind	Weather
London	18	W 10	Cloudy
Manchester	16	W 10	Cloudy
Birmingham	17	W 10	Cloudy
Cardiff	16	W 10	Cloudy
Belfast	15	W 10	Cloudy
Edinburgh	14	W 10	Cloudy
Glasgow	14	W 10	Cloudy
London	18	W 10	Cloudy
Manchester	16	W 10	Cloudy
Birmingham	17	W 10	Cloudy
Cardiff	16	W 10	Cloudy
Belfast	15	W 10	Cloudy
Edinburgh	14	W 10	Cloudy
Glasgow	14	W 10	Cloudy

Around the world

City	Temp	Wind	Weather
London	18	W 10	Cloudy
Manchester	16	W 10	Cloudy
Birmingham	17	W 10	Cloudy
Cardiff	16	W 10	Cloudy
Belfast	15	W 10	Cloudy
Edinburgh	14	W 10	Cloudy
Glasgow	14	W 10	Cloudy
London	18	W 10	Cloudy
Manchester	16	W 10	Cloudy
Birmingham	17	W 10	Cloudy
Cardiff	16	W 10	Cloudy
Belfast	15	W 10	Cloudy
Edinburgh	14	W 10	Cloudy
Glasgow	14	W 10	Cloudy

European weather outlook

Grey skies and showery bursts of rain across much of Norway and Sweden, although the extreme south of Sweden should stay mostly fine and warm. Finland is expected to be very hot and sunny, but Denmark will be very hot and humid at first with thundery showers, followed by drier and cooler weather. Highs ranging from 27C over eastern Denmark to just 12C in the far north.

Low Countries, Germany, Austria, Switzerland:

Another stunning day for most places with blue skies and unbroken sunshine, but the Low Countries will be more unsettled with a threat of thundery showers. Max temp 28-32C.

France:

North-east France will be hot and sunny with showers and thunderstorms, but also some summer interludes. North-western France will be bright and comfortably warm with low humidity levels. Central and southern France will be very hot and sunny. Highs 29-34C, but lower in Brittany.

Spain and Portugal:

Portugal and north-west Spain will be mostly dry and bright with patchy cloud, sunny spells and isolated showers. The rest of Spain should have blue skies and virtually uninterrupted sunshine. Highs 27-34C but higher in Seville and Cordoba and a bit lower on the beaches with pleasant sea-breezes.

An isolated thunderstorm is possible in the south but most of the country will have plenty of hot sunshine and light breezes. Highs 26-31C.

Greece:

Today will be glorious again over most of Greece with crystal clear blue skies and sun-filled skies. It will be very hot inland with highs up to 32C but comfortably hot on the beaches and islands.

Television and radio — Saturday

BBC 1
8.55am News Weather, 9.30 Oscar's Orchestra, 9.55 Hobbes Soccer, 9.15 The Rascals, 9.45 Marvel Action Hour, 10.45 Group H, 11.15 Great Valley High, 11.35 The O Zone, 11.45 News, 11.45 Grandstand, 8.10 News Weather, 8.55 Regional News And Weather, 6.55 Day's Army, 8.55 Full Swing, 7.55 The News Adventure Of Superman, 6.10 Countdown, 8.55 The National Lottery Live, 8.05 Bugs, 8.25 News And Sport, 8.55 News, 10.55 PM Live, 11.05 News, 11.45 Euro 95, 12.45 Cricket — First Test, 1.25 PM Live, The Mighty Quinn, 3.00 Weather, 3.05 Close

BBC 2
7.05am Open University: The Way To Holmes, 1.15 Watch Out, 1.30 Global Warning, 1.35 Fully Booked, 1.40 Regional Report, 1.55 PM Live, 2.00 News, 2.05 Cricket — First Test, 2.00 What The Papers Say, 8.15 News And Sport, 8.55 Regional News And Weather, 6.55 Day's Army, 8.55 Full Swing, 7.55 The News Adventure Of Superman, 6.10 Countdown, 8.55 The National Lottery Live, 8.05 Bugs, 8.25 News And Sport, 8.55 News, 10.55 PM Live, 11.05 News, 11.45 Euro 95, 12.45 Cricket — First Test, 1.25 PM Live, The Mighty Quinn, 3.00 Weather, 3.05 Close

BBC Prime
8.00am BBC World News, 8.50 Building Rights, 9.00am BBC World News, 9.50 Morning News, 10.00am BBC World News, 10.50am News, 11.00am News, 11.30am News, 11.45am News, 12.00pm News, 12.30pm News, 1.00pm News, 1.30pm News, 1.45pm News, 2.00pm News, 2.30pm News, 3.00pm News, 3.30pm News, 4.00pm News, 4.30pm News, 5.00pm News, 5.30pm News, 6.00pm News, 6.30pm News, 7.00pm News, 7.30pm News, 8.00pm News, 8.30pm News, 9.00pm News, 9.30pm News, 10.00pm News, 10.30pm News, 11.00pm News, 11.30pm News, 12.00pm News, 12.30pm News, 1.00pm News, 1.30pm News, 1.45pm News, 2.00pm News, 2.30pm News, 3.00pm News, 3.30pm News, 4.00pm News, 4.30pm News, 5.00pm News, 5.30pm News, 6.00pm News, 6.30pm News, 7.00pm News, 7.30pm News, 8.00pm News, 8.30pm News, 9.00pm News, 9.30pm News, 10.00pm News, 10.30pm News, 11.00pm News, 11.30pm News, 12.00pm News, 12.30pm News, 1.00pm News, 1.30pm News, 1.45pm News, 2.00pm News, 2.30pm News, 3.00pm News, 3.30pm News, 4.00pm News, 4.30pm News, 5.00pm News, 5.30pm News, 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Battle continues to rage over Guernica as Basques lay claim to Picasso's tortured symbol



Guernica, painted after fascist bombers attacked the Basque town. Picasso allowed it to be shown in Madrid when democracy was restored, but now the Basques are claiming it for a new museum in Bilbao PICTURE COURTESY BRIDGEMAN LIBRARY

Born of civil war, the masterpiece yet again forms the backdrop to Spanish strife, writes Adela Gooch in Madrid

PICASSO'S emblematic canvas Guernica, which suffered many years of political exile before going on display in Madrid after the death of General Franco, has become the subject of a new battle: the Basque government wants it to form the centrepiece of a new museum in the region.

The painting has particular significance for Basques because it depicts the bombing of Guernica, site of the ancient Basque parliament, by German planes on behalf of General Franco during the Spanish civil war.

But the Reina Sofia modern art museum in Madrid, where it is a star attraction, is reluctant to let it go. Experts there argue that it is too fragile to travel. They argue that it is the property of the Spanish state and should not be used to promote the new Basque museum, which is part of a private foundation. Several members of the Reina Sofia's board have threatened to resign over the issue.

Picasso stated in his will that Guernica, which was commissioned by Spain's Republican government for the great exhibition held in Paris in 1937, should become part of the Prado's collection — but only after democracy was reinstated. The painting came to Madrid in 1981 and was shown in the Prado until the Reina Sofia succeeded in wrenching it away.

However, Basque nationalists have always claimed that the painting should be shown in Guernica itself. The painting's curators in Madrid have countered the demand saying there was no suitable place to display it.

But the Basque case has been strengthened by the decision of the Guggenheim Foundation in the United States to



establish a new museum in Bilbao — due to open next year — to show its modern art collection in Europe. Bilbao is 12 miles from Guernica.

Juan Ignacio Vidarte, director of the Bilbao Guggenheim project, stresses that Guernica, which has always needed special protection from attack and until last year was encased in bullet-proof glass — could be displayed in ideal conditions in the new museum.

"We have several galleries that would meet requirements more than adequately but, of course, it is ultimately a political decision," he said.

This latest tug of war over Guernica follows an unsuccessful attempt by France to borrow the painting last year.

The French have always annoyed Spaniards by laying claim to Picasso, who was born in Malaga but lived much of his life in France.

Guernica was painted in Paris and exhibited in the Great Exhibition there in 1937, where it immediately became a symbol of the battle in Spain between left and right.

The French president, Jacques Chirac, personally

lobbied the Spanish government last autumn for the painting to form part of an exhibition in Paris this year.

Spain's then prime minister, Felipe González, refused on the grounds that it was too delicate to travel. Guernica is painted on a fragile canvas with relatively poor materials, and has suffered as a result of its many moves and poor restoration.

For the transfer from the Prado to the Reina Sofia in 1982, roads were cleared and a special truck used to transport the painting in its frame. According to art experts, rolling it up for a longer trip could cause irreparable damage.

But the political pressure for Guernica to travel to Bilbao, if only temporarily, is strong.

The Basque regional government, made up of moderate nationalists, had to lobby hard to persuade the Guggenheim Foundation to locate its new European museum in a region plagued by terrorism.

One of the factors which influenced the decision, apart from the Basques' agreement to foot the 22,300 million peseta (£112 million) bill for the new museum in full, was an assurance given by the Basques that Guernica could be exhibited there.

Xabier Arzalluz, the Basque regional president, has raised the subject directly with Spain's new conservative prime minister, José María Aznar, whose minority government relies on nationalists, including the Basques.

Despite the experts' recommendations, Mr Aznar will find it hard to deny the request altogether. It comes amid efforts to promote the Basque country for tourism and counter the negative image created by terrorism.

French police yesterday ejected Spanish Basque separatists from a church they had been occupying to demand they be allowed to live in France. Several people were arrested, witnesses said.

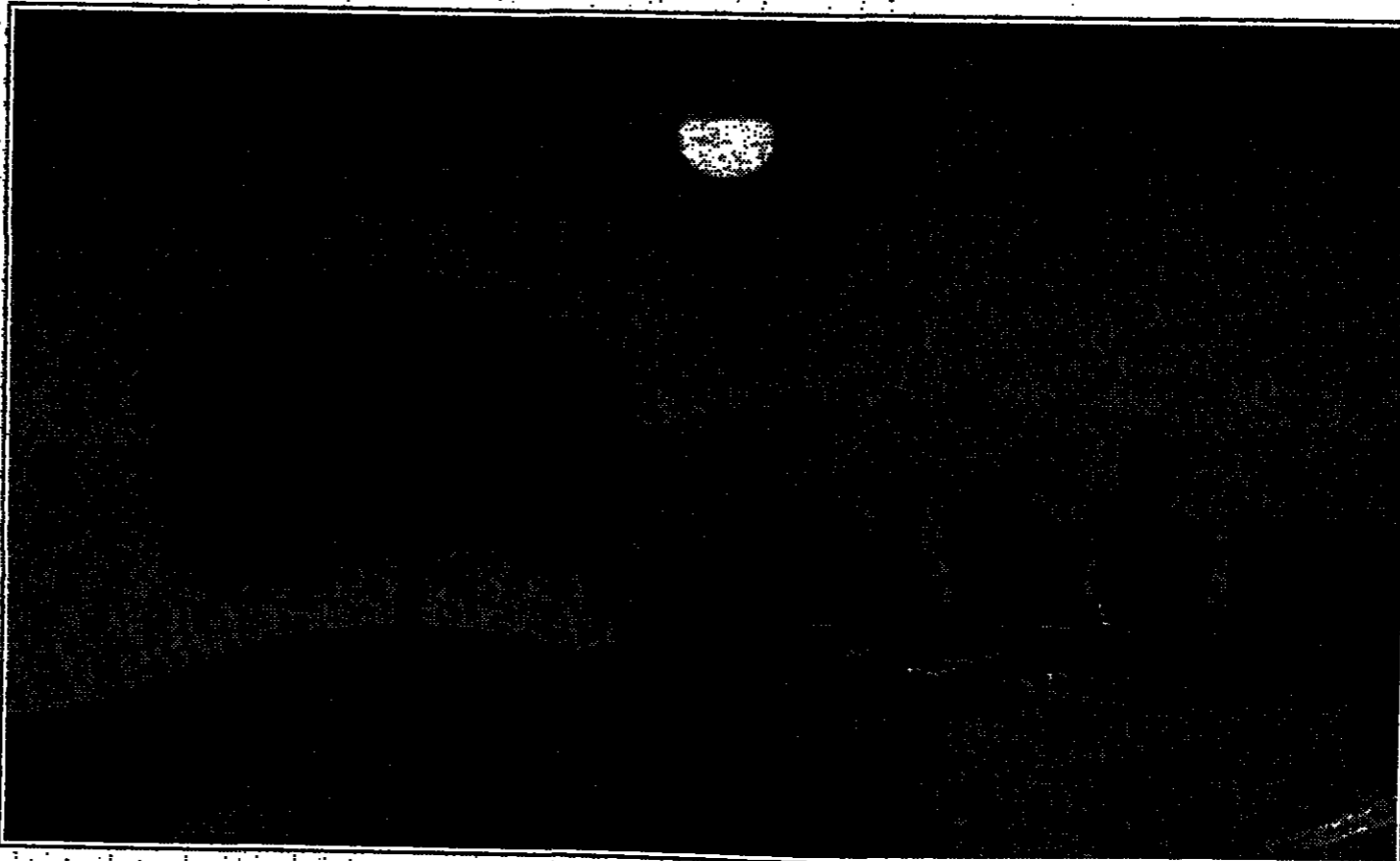
The 10 separatists had been expelled from France in 1984 on suspicion of ties to the Basque separatist group ETA. They led relatives into the cathedral of Bayonne five days ago.

When on holiday,

you travel lighter,

feel lighter,

dress lighter.



Lucany, Italy

Guinness seeks spirits through virtual ouija board

Don Atkinson

CHURCHMEN united yesterday to warn the public away from the world's first Internet ouija board, which has been set up by the drinks company Guinness.

Guinness is launching the virtual ouija board on Monday as part of an Internet promotion celebrating 150 years of Dewar's whisky. The board allows net users to switch the movement of a whisky glass over to random spiritual control.

Father Dominic Walker, a psychologist and a church

adviser on the occult, said the public should give it a wide berth. He said: "I can't imagine how it would work on the Internet", adding "it can be dangerous". Father Kit Cunningham, rector of St Etheldreda's Catholic church in Holborn, London, said it was "horrendously dangerous... I'm appalled".

A spokesman for Dewar's insisted the "board" was nothing more than "light-hearted entertainment".

This is the first time ouija has been available on the Internet. It forms one part of Dewar's Internet promotion, which centres on Tommy Dewar, son of the

distillery's founder, John Dewar. Tommy was perhaps the first marketing guru, once declaring: "Advertising is to sales what imagination is to poetry".

Mr Walker doubted if a ouija board could work on the net, as the real thing "relies upon a certain psychodynamics". He believes that a ouija glass does move, but does so as a result of mental energy created by a fearful or stressed person.

Last night, Dewar was not discounting entirely the idea that the "board" may actually make contact with the spirit world. "Well, it's hard to say," said a spokesman.

So Samsonite created the ultra-light luggage to make it lighter on you.

A wide variety of soft luggage and bags made of durable polyester material. Modern design, smooth lines. Six cases on wheels with light and strong frames. All cases feature a main zipper compartment with special com-



bination lock closure. Vertical cases with wheels: from boardcase to "Cargo"-size. Extensive range of functional shoulder bags, travel bags and duffles on wheels. Perfect for car and train travel. Available in different colours. Spark

Samsonite
Always travel with confidence.

Television's obsession with the present is exciting and successful and ultimately dangerous. It is the equivalent of the get-rich-quick fast-farming which so rapidly made an agricultural desert of so many fertile prairies.
Melvyn Bragg

Outlook page 19

Shi Sugang 1996



SHI SUGANG drew his hands above his head, then swept them through the air to his sides, writes Madeleine Bunting. Instantly, his shaved head reddened with concentration and effort. He paused and relaxed. Picking up an iron bar almost a centimetre thick, he smashed it over his head, scattering chunks of metal. He then bowed and walked over to his fellow Zen monks, leaving his audience gawping. One of 25 monks due to begin their first tour of Britain next week, Shi Sugang has trained in meditation and martial arts for 20 years. The monks come from Shaolin, the oldest monastery in China and the birthplace of Zen Buddhism and kung fu. A sharp crack echoed around the Buddhist Peace Pagoda in Battersea Park, London, opposite, as one monk smashed a wooden stake across the bare back of another, Shi Xingyun. They concentrated their minds in a few seconds and then leapt effortlessly high into the air and somersaulted. The monks will visit Newcastle, Sheffield, Manchester, Birmingham and London from next Thursday. PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID MANSELL

Labour leader's preferred approach already standard at state schools

Blair rejects mixed ability teaching

John Carvel Education Editor

TONY BLAIR yesterday extracted maximum political advantage from a speech committing a Labour government to encourage grouping of children by ability in comprehensives, in spite of evidence that this is already standard practice for most lessons in an overwhelming majority of state secondary schools.

He dissociated the party from principles of mixed ability teaching which were fashionable among educational theorists 20 or 30 years ago, but which are now rarely applied in core subjects for pupils over the age of 13.

"Mixed ability teaching is for some people as much of an ideology as the principle of comprehensive admission itself," he said at Didcot Girls' School in Oxfordshire. "Not to take account of the obvious common sense that different children move at different speeds and have differing abilities, is to give idealism a bad name."

"The modernisation of the comprehensive principle requires that all pupils are encouraged to progress as far and as fast as they are able. Grouping children by ability can be an important way of making that happen."

The speech was described by Conservative officials as "the longest apology note in history". John Major said it was "the usual public rela-

tions exercise", and hoped Mr Blair would apologise for "30 years of Labour education policy and the activity of almost every Labour education authority up and down the country".

John Dumford, president of the Secondary Heads Association, said he knew of no comprehensive adopting the mixed ability approach throughout its teaching. Many heads thought it suitable for pupils in their first year of transition after primary school and valuable in later years for subjects such

as art and music. "But there are virtually no schools which do mixed ability across the board for philosophical reasons."

Most pupils were already divided into sets according to their ability in individual subjects - notably for maths and English.

This did not amount to backdoor streaming, he said, because children in the top ability range in one subject often showed less aptitude in another.

Mr Blair gave a strong restatement of Labour's belief in the comprehensive system and gave praise to the beleaguered teaching profession

for its contribution to raising standards. "More children are doing better than ever before," he said. "This is a tribute to teachers in comprehensive schools - which still educate over 90 per cent of our young people."

But there was still an unacceptable gap between the performance of the best and worst schools.

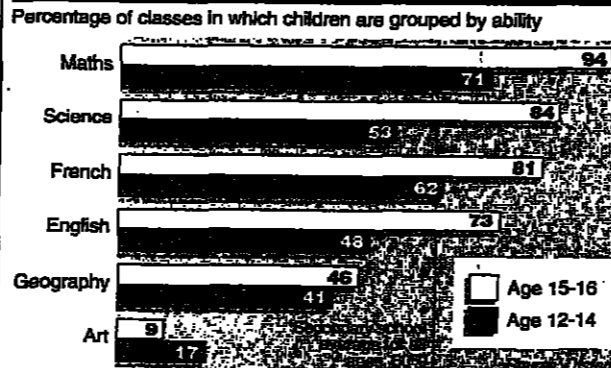
"In some cases problems in comprehensives have resulted from a desire among teachers to provide for children from disadvantaged backgrounds a warm and caring environment, but not to a sufficient extent the high expectations which are so essential to success."

The result of this "well-meaning but damaging attitude" was to reinforce those children's disadvantage. "Equality must not become the enemy of quality."

The speech was being interpreted yesterday as a move to identify Labour with the traditional educational approach, but Mr Blair said new technology was helping the better schools to move beyond the old debate between mixed ability and selection. It was now possible to achieve more flexible timetables, allowing schools to vary their approach to pupil grouping.

Labour would use the policy levers of special grants, Ofsted inspections, teacher training and advanced skills teacher status "to promote a third way between the limitations of the 11-plus and mixed ability teaching", he said.

Grouping by ability



All-in groups were widely seen as impractical from the start

John Carvel

ENTHUSIASM for mixed-ability teaching developed in the profession about 30 years ago, but never took hold in comprehensives, which continued to divide pupils according to aptitude in particular subjects once they had settled down in the school.

In 1961 the London County Council said none of its comprehensive schools was organised "upon the impractical assumptions that teaching groups covering the whole range of ability are suitable or desirable".

The mixed-ability approach began to gather momentum in the mid-1960s, when teacher conferences and workshops began to focus on evidence of successful classroom experiments. Teachers reported increased motivation among pupils, improved standards of behaviour and greater willingness to participate in the life of the

school. But the shift to mixed-ability teaching was never completed.

In a study this year, Caroline Benn and Clyde Clivity said: "Despite the campaigning zeal of a number of heads and teachers, all the evidence suggests that the movement to challenge traditional forms of pupil grouping began to lose its momentum in the 1970s... The majority of schools were reluctant to experiment with the new (and largely unproven) methods of organising learning."

Mobile phone sales firms told to drop unfair terms

Nicholas Bannister Technology Editor

THE LEADING mobile phone sales companies have been told to drop unfair terms in their contracts or face legal action by the Office of Fair Trading.

The companies include subsidiaries of British Telecom and all four cellular network operators - Cellnet, Vodafone, Orange and Mercury One-2-One. The others, Astec Communications, Motorola Tel-co, the Peoples Phone Company and UniquelAir, in effect sell airtime on the big networks but are allowed to have their own tariff packages and contracts.

John Bridgeman, OFT director general, said the contracts were unfairly weighted in favour of the companies and that he would seek an injunction preventing their use if companies did not agree to drop the unfair terms.

After poor geographical coverage, contract terms are probably the biggest cause for complaints by Britain's 5 million mobile users. Some customers who have not read the small print carefully can find themselves locked into pay-

Poor air quality

- OFT wants an end to:
• Terms in print smaller than rest of material
• Unintelligible or hidden terms
• Too many, and often too legalistic, clauses
• Companies' ability to change prices without giving customers escape routes
• Unreasonably long periods of notice
• Compensation payments for contracts ended early
• Wide-ranging limitation of company's liability.

ing for a mobile service for 15 months.

The Consumers' Association welcomed Mr Bridgeman's "firm and public stand", adding that only the OFT could take effective action against mobile phone service providers.

The move was also welcomed by Don Cruickshank, director general of Ofel, which receives about 4,000 complaints a year about mobile phones but is powerless to act if a customer has signed a contract. The industry was surprised

at the OFT statement since discussions on improving contracts were already under way. David Savage, chairman of Astec and of the service provider section of the Federation of Communication Services, said a final draft of a new code of conduct would be completed within six weeks.

Most of the companies accept that improvements in presentation and clarity could be made, but most rejected the OFT's criticism of long initial contracts, pointing out that they had to be able to recover the subsidies on hand sets. A phone sold for £9.99 to the subscriber actually cost the service provider about £300, Mr Savage said.

He pointed out that Mr Bridgeman had admitted that some firms had already improved their contracts. His own firm was just about to offer an option allowing subscribers to buy a handset at full price and quit the service at no notice.

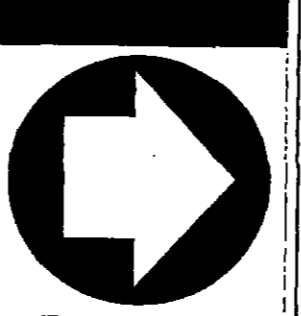
The Government initially barred mobile groups from selling their services direct to the public, and some service providers took advantage of customers' lack of familiarity with mobile phones.

Tax-efficient ways of passing on property

Would you like to pass on money and property without wrapping your gifts in an unnecessary tax bill? Then read *The Which? Guide to Giving and Inheriting*. Easy to understand, and with case histories throughout, the book explains how to use the tax system to increase the value of your gifts, enabling you to plan ahead and control

your finances. In fact, "it could be the wisest investment you will ever make" (Irish News). The guide covers • inheritance tax • capital gains tax • setting up trusts • making use of covenants • making and updating a will • special rules for family businesses • inheritance laws in Scotland • the National Lottery

• passing on property. *The Which? Guide to Giving and Inheriting* is a must for anyone who wants to avoid paying more tax than necessary and could make a big difference to those to whom you give. It costs just £9.99 (P&P FREE), so why not order your copy NOW using the order form below? Full refund if not satisfied.



"There is a huge attachment to the bridge. It is a beautiful structure and once you've started here people rarely want to leave. I can't imagine myself working anywhere else until I retire."

Outlook page 15

Coping with bereavement

When someone dies, practical decisions have to be made quickly at a traumatic time. *What to Do When Someone Dies* is the essential book from Which? that has guided over 200,000 readers through the process. Clear, concise and practical, it looks at • registering a death • the role of the coroner • organ donation • arranging a funeral • choosing between burial and cremation • claiming state benefits • arranging a funeral without a funeral director • humanist and other non-Christian funerals • coping with grief • the funeral ombudsman scheme. In addition, there's a list of support groups offering help during this difficult time, plus advice on pre-arranging your own funeral. Covering law and practice in England and Wales, and highlighting the important differences which apply in Scotland, *What to Do When Someone Dies* is required reading for anyone facing bereavement. It costs just £9.99 (P&P FREE), so why not order your copy NOW using the order form on the right? Full refund if not satisfied.

Make your will - or administer an estate - without a solicitor

Have you been putting off making a will? Could you administer the estate of a deceased relative? Do you understand the basic rules of inheritance tax, and do you know how much you could save your heirs by following a few simple guidelines? *Wills and Probate* is a practical guide from Which?. It's helped over 300,000 people tackle these tasks simply and effectively, and explains • how to make - and revise - a straightforward will, so that your wishes can be carried out without complications • the implications of inheritance tax,

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Advertisement for Abbot Ale. Features the text '7 DAYS IN THE LIFE OF A MONK' in large, stylized letters. Below the text is a list of activities for each day: Day One (Prayer, chanting and good works), Day Two (More prayer, chanting and good works), Day Three (More of the above), Day Four (Ditto), Day Five (More ditto), Day Six (Even more ditto), Day Seven (At last! Arrival of the Abbot's Ale after 7 days fermentation. Celebrate with prayer, chanting and good works). At the bottom, it says 'ABBOT ALE FROM GREENE KING' with an image of a beer glass and a bottle of Abbot Ale.

Bosnia polls: a failure in the making

Julian Borger in Sarajevo

THE United States-based pressure group Human Rights Watch yesterday described the Bosnian peace process as a "failure in the making" and warned that unless Nato and the international community do more to enforce respect for human rights, elections due in three months will be a "charade".

The scathing report details widespread human rights abuses, particularly on Serb territory. It has intensified the spotlight already trained on the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), which was given the job last December of supervising elections and judging whether Bosnia was ready for a free poll.

That judgment was pre-

empted at Sunday's Balkan conference in Geneva by the secretary of state, Warren Christopher, who announced elections would take place on schedule by September 14, despite the concerns of the OSCE's human rights monitors.

The US government is eager to get Bosnia's elections out of the way and begin the withdrawal of US troops before the American presidential elections in November.

The OSCE now finds itself under considerable US pressure to administer rushed elections which many in the organisation fear will only entrench Serb hardliners and hasten the division of Bosnia. The two top officials coordinating human rights monitoring and election preparations have resigned in the past fortnight, and staff morale is at an all-time low after the OSCE leadership em-

barked on what many employees viewed as a whitewash of the human rights situation.

According to staff, Robert Frowick (the US diplomat who heads the OSCE mission in Bosnia) returned from the Geneva conference with orders to play down human rights concerns.

"We were told basically to accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative," said one disgruntled employee. "I think a lot of us were wondering what we were here for in the first place, and whether the OSCE should have had a human rights arm at all."

The Geneva conference was also followed by rigid new rules restricting staff communication with the press, and a witch-hunt for employees who leaked information.

Mr Frowick's chief of staff, Bill Stuebner, resigned a fortnight ago. Colleagues said he

felt his reports warning that conditions for free elections did not exist were being ignored. The director of elections, Judy Thompson, also stood down, reportedly complaining that the OSCE did not have the resources to enforce I-For, said there was no evidence of political will on the Serb side to allow the reintegration of the country and free movement of its people, and there had been "zero" change in Serb attitudes since I-For arrived in December.

Mr Frowick argued earlier this week that holding elections, even in a very imperfect environment, could help democracy take root. To insist on better conditions before going ahead, he said, "would imply we'd need democracy first before we have elections."

Diplomats point out that even opposition parties, of all ethnic identities, favour going ahead with the elections.

But OSCE human rights officials are concerned that elections would entrench the position of indicted war criminals such as Radovan Karadzic, currently in power in

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European election monitors 'have been told to do something they don't believe in. They're in a crisis'

European election monitors have been told to do something they don't believe in. They're in a crisis.

The resignations have compounded earlier staff difficulties. OSCE salaries have not been high enough to draw experts from Europe and the US, so - with voter registration already under way - 12 out of 49 human rights posts have not been filled.

The elections mission is further hamstrung by bureau-

resolutely opposed to free elections and are hampering the work of OSCE field officers. Hardliners are preventing refugees from crossing the old front line to return to their homes, and nationalists across the country retain an iron grip on the media.

Admiral Leighton Smith, the outgoing commander of the Nato-led peacekeeping

Sale of top Czech team tests supporters' loyalty

The purchase by Slovak neighbours of Prague's top football team has dented national pride, writes Ian Traynor

THE Czech national football team have qualified for the finals of Euro 96 starting this weekend, but otherwise it has been a miserable season for the pride of their domestic league, Sparta Prague.

In the previous 10 years the team that utterly dominates Czech football won the league championship eight times and finished runners-up twice. This year they came a wretched fourth and were reduced to admitting fans free by the final matches.

But just when it seemed things could get no worse, they did. The club was sold to foreigners. And not any old foreigners, but a Slovak company.

Since Czechoslovakia split in 1993, the Czechs have raced ahead economically, scoffing condescendingly at their poorer Slovak neighbours. And while Slovakia failed to qualify for Euro 96, the Czechs will line up against Germany tomorrow.

But having seized ownership of a symbolic part of the Czech family silver, the Slovaks are now doing the crowding. And Sparta's fans don't like it.

"Well, I wouldn't stand for the sale of Slovak Bratis-

lava [Slovakia's top team]," smirked the Slovak prime minister, Vladimir Meciar, clearly relishing the coup in Prague.

The Czech opposition leader, Milos Zeman, complained it was "absurd" to sell the club "abroad".

Vladimir Kostalik, aged 35, who has attended almost every Sparta home game since his teens, is suddenly having doubts.

"It's not that we're against foreign capital. If the money came from Florida that would be great. But because it's from Slovakia, it's a problem," he said.

The sale of the 102-year-old club, which has won the league a record 22 times, came as a bombshell a couple of weeks ago after being wrapped in mystery and secrecy. Fans feel betrayed.

Petr Makh, a young Prague entrepreneur, was locked in negotiations for

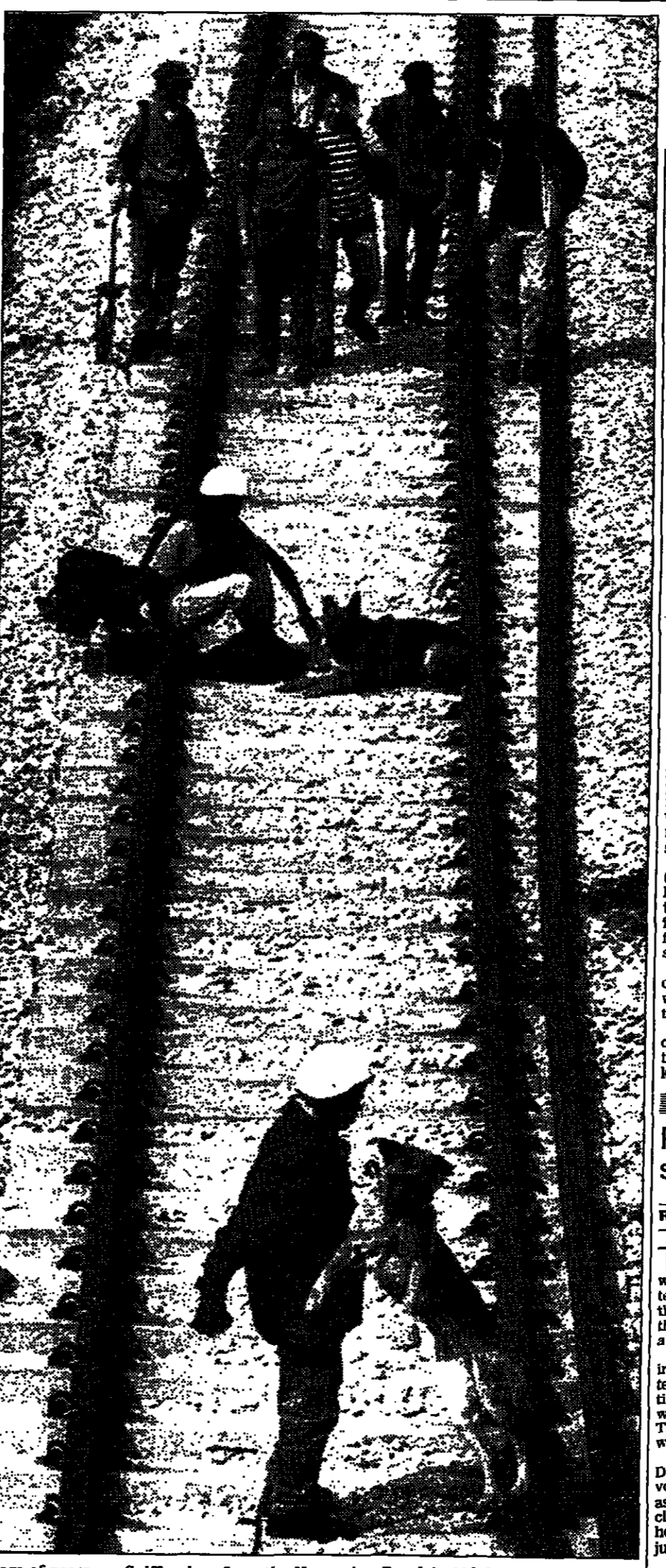
months over the sale of his 93 per cent share in the club. He would not reveal he was talking to the VZS steelworks in the east Slovak town of Koste. The steelworks is headed by the son of a Slovak government minister.

Worse, Mr Makh misled the fans and country. In a match programme at the end of April, he said he was negotiating with a "strong non-Slovak partner".

Josef Chovanec, aged 36, the former Czech international and PSV Eindhoven sweeper who now manages Sparta, has defended the deception tactics.

"The point is that there were no Czech businessmen willing to invest in the club and they were keen to destroy us," he claimed, hinting at a dark anti-Sparta plot. "We had to hide the fact that our partner was Slovak because we were under a lot of pressure and there are people here who would have tried to wreck the deal. So we pretended we were talking to a Western partner but in reality we were negotiating with someone completely different. Anyway, we don't have problems with Slovaks. We lived with them for long enough."

But Mr Kostalik and his pals in the pubs of Prague will take some convincing that Slovak money is just the ticket to restore Sparta's fortunes. And he is not so sure he can stomach the humble pie.



Dogs of peace... Sniffer dogs from the Norwegian People's Aid de-mining team help clear a railway tunnel to allow investigators from the Hague war crimes tribunal to look for evidence of alleged mass killings near Tuzla, Bosnia. PHOTOGRAPH: ODD ANDERSEN

'Some were thin, others skeletal'

Reuters in The Hague

A GUARDIAN correspondent, Ed Vulliamy, told the Yugoslavia war crimes tribunal yesterday how he met Muslims who had been reduced to living skeletons and were too scared to speak of their ordeal in prison camps run by the Bosnian Serbs.

Mr Vulliamy, one of the first reporters to visit the Omarska and Trnopolje camps in August 1992, was testifying in the trial of the Bosnian Serb Dusan Tadic, who is accused of atrocities at the camps during the "ethnic cleansing" of the Prijedor region.

Mr Vulliamy went to the camps, along with an Independent Television News (ITN) crew, at the invitation of the Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic, who had said the visit would disprove media reports that Muslim prisoners were being maltreated.

At Omarska, the journalists watched as groups of detainees, supervised by armed guards, jogged into a canteen where they were given a minute to eat a bowl of stew and a piece of bread.

Mr Vulliamy said it was immediately apparent that some prisoners were in an appalling physical condition. "They were very thin, others in reasonable condition, others skeletal," he said.

"When they were eating, they were eating as if... they hadn't eaten for a very long time, as if they hadn't seen food for a while. It was a fairly sobering sight," he said.

Under the constant watch of Serb guards, the prisoners were reluctant to respond to the reporters' questions.

"The physical state of some of them told us more than their words as to what kind of treatment they were

getting. There was really very little to go on in terms of interviews and words. They were manifestly scared, scared stiff."

Mr Vulliamy said he could not forget how one man had told him: "I do not want to tell any lies but I cannot tell the truth."

Others, he said, remained silent but communicated with their eyes. "There is something inimitable about some body staring at you in that way, saying: Look at me and try and work out for yourself what I'm trying to say."

The journalists were denied access to the prisoners' sleeping quarters and were driven instead to Trnopolje.

The Guardian's report and ITN pictures provoked an international outcry and led the Bosnian Serbs to close the camps almost immediately.

Mr Tadic, who denies all charges, showed no emotion as he watched the disturbing images on a video monitor.

Dressed smartly in a suit and tie, and flanked by two guards, he seemed relaxed as he took notes during Mr Vulliamy's testimony.

His trial enters its sixth week next week, when the first eyewitnesses are due to appear.

Mr Tadic, a former bar-owner and karate teacher, is accused of murdering, raping and torturing Muslims after the Bosnian Serbs seized power in the Prijedor area of north-west Bosnia in 1992.

Created by the United Nations Security Council in May 1993, the criminal tribunal for former Yugoslavia is the first international body for the prosecution of war crimes since the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials held after the second world war.

To date, the Hague tribunal has indicted 58 suspects - 45 Serbs, nine Croats and three Muslims - six of whom are being held at the tribunal's detention centre.

Russian election candidate bombed

David Hearst in Moscow

RUSSIA'S election season claimed its first victim yesterday, when Valery Shantsyev, the running mate of Moscow's mayor Yuri Luzhkov, was severely injured in a bomb attack outside his home in central Moscow.

The attack on Mr Shantsyev, a powerful figure in the Moscow local government, was seen as an attempt to prevent Mr Luzhkov's re-election as mayor, in a vote a week tomorrow the same day as the presidential election.

Under election rules, Mr Luzhkov, the clear front runner, could be forced from the race if his running mate dies.

Mr Shantsyev, aged 49, was admitted to hospital with third degree burns and shrapnel injuries. His condition was serious but not life-threatening. Vasily Kuptsov, the Moscow chief of police, said a bodyguard and a passer-by were also slightly injured.

Mr Kuptsov said the bomb planted outside Mr Shant-

syev's home was radio-controlled. "I think it was a terrorist act deliberately aimed at this person and no one else. This could not simply be a contract killing of a businessman because Valery Pavlinovich [Shantsyev] was not involved in any kind of business, as everyone knew."

The attack has put Moscow's already fiery political establishment further on edge, because the municipal and national elections are so closely linked.

Thousands of troops have already been drafted into Moscow in the event of an attack by Chechen separatists. The heightened security may also increase the tension in the run-up to polling day, when thousands of communist supporters are expected to arrive at Russia's 30,000 polling stations in response to a call by the communist presidential candidate, Gennady Zyuganov, to try to prevent election fraud.

Speculation on the motive for the attack on Mr Shantsyev increased with the knowledge that he has important contacts with the Com-

munist Party. He calls himself a "supporter of the communist idea".

Mr Luzhkov, who is backed by Russia's richest businessmen and has established a rival power base to the Kremlin, last year made his peace with Mr Yeltsin after a series of political standoffs with the former privatisation chief, Anatoly Chubais.

Today the ambitious Mr Luzhkov appears on large election posters shaking hands with the president, and has accompanied Mr Yeltsin on his provincial tours. The aim of these visits is to make Moscow's mayor a nationally known figure. He is tipped as a future prime minister.

Meanwhile, tension rose in Chechnya last night after reports that 50 rebel fighters had re-entered the town of Shal. Three days of talks with representatives from Moscow broke up yesterday with no agreement on the issue of prisoner exchange.

Both sides expressed pessimism about the ceasefire deal signed in Moscow 10 days ago.

Will the wad win? page 13

PHOTOGRAPH: ODD ANDERSEN

PHOTOGRAPH: ODD ANDERSEN

Pilots allowed helicopter to drop, says German crash survivor

Reuters in Dortmund

THE only survivor of a German helicopter crash in which 13 people died said yesterday the pilots seemed to let the helicopter drop through the air and then laughed about it.

The air force helicopter, giving a ride to young people attending a European youth festival in Dortmund, crashed in woodland south of the city on Thursday in one of Germany's worst military accidents.

The state prosecutor, Karl Dieter Staat, said the survivor - named by newspapers as Sven Bolliger, aged 25 - claimed the pilots "pulled the helicopter upwards and then just let it drop".

The pilots had laughed and passengers had applauded the manoeuvre. It happened a second time, and the helicop-

ter hit treetops and crashed, the survivor said.

Mr Staat said he was not ruling out pilot error, but was also looking at the possibility of a technical failure.

The defence ministry, investigating independently, cautioned against treating the manoeuvres as risk-taking. A spokesman said a helicopter leavelling out after it could give passengers the impression they were falling, and that the pilots, aged 38 and 33, might have been attempting an emergency landing.

Mr Bolliger was pulled out of the wreckage by people who stopped on an adjacent motorway. Other passengers also appeared to be alive, but an explosion stopped more rescues.

The dead included the two crew, a military nurse, five members of television teams and six young people.

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June 8 1996

Crime tide 'rising to overwhelm South Africa'

David Beresford in Johannesburg

SOUTH Africa's chief of police warned yesterday that crime in the country was in danger of spinning out of control.

Commissioner George Fivaz warned of the crisis in a briefing to local newspaper editors, and complained of shortages of staff and resources.

His warning coincided with a report by a leading South African bank, Nedcor, that crime was costing more than \$6 billion a year — considerably more than is entering the country through foreign investment. The study showed that 80 per cent of households had fallen victim to crime in a two-year period.

Mr Fivaz said one of the police's biggest problems was a shortage of qualified personnel, and he estimated that 75 per cent of detectives were not properly trained.

This helped explain another extraordinary statistic released by police last week — that they have 18,000 unsolved murders on their books.

A lack of training is not the force's only problem. Earlier this week it was disclosed that an internal anti-corruption unit was receiving two complaints of criminal activity by police officers a day.

A funeral service in Johannesburg this week gave poignant testimony to the crime plague. More than 40 Springbok and provincial rugby players formed a guard of honour for two coffins con-

taining the remains of Transvaal player Pietman Van Rensburg and his father, Piet, a schools rugby coach. They had been shot dead by robbers for \$45.

The prison service also has problems dealing with criminals. Before a demonstration by warders this week over pay, their union appealed to prisoners not to use the opportunity to escape. Last year there were about 100 break-outs a month — compared with 52 in Britain over the whole year.

Crime is routinely, and to some extent justly, blamed on social problems in the townships. But the country's whites have been disabused of any belief that criminal behaviour is restricted to blacks by two horrendous crimes over the past week.

In one a white youth giving a teenage couple a lift in his car produced a pistol, made them strip and ordered them to have sex. When the boy, aged 15, refused he was shot dead and the gunman raped the girl, aged 18, twice. In the other case, two young white men and a woman killed and cut up a Dutch immigrant — carting the dismembered pieces around in a suitcase — in an attempt to claim his \$460 pension.

The health minister, Nkosazana Zuma, is refusing to resign despite a public investigator's report criticising a funding scandal in her department. About \$2 million was spent on an AIDS-awareness play — much of it donations from the European Union, which is demanding the money's return.



Smoking gunman... Rambo Farley, a young Liberian fighter with Roosevelt Johnson's Ullimo-J faction, lights a cigarette on Monrovia's front line. PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID GUTTENBERGER

Damascus claims backing against Netanyahu

Fearful Syrians court Arab chiefs

David Hirst in Beirut

PRESIDENT Hafez al-Assad of Syria, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia met in Damascus yesterday in the third Arab summit since last week's Israeli elections brought the right to power.

By coming to Damascus, Syrian officials said, the two pro-United States Arab leaders were putting their weight behind Syria's position on the peace process, and its insistence on preserving the land-for-peace formula that Israel's prime minister-elect, Benjamin Netanyahu, has rejected.

Syria and Egypt say this tripartite meeting should pave the way for a larger Arab summit.

Syrian press warned Mr Netanyahu yesterday that if he persisted in his refusal to give up the Golan Heights, Syria "could have nothing to do with such a peace". It warned the Arabs that, while no major war could bring Arab leaders together in a situation as dire as this, those "with a sense of national responsibility" must work to "save the Arab nation from perdition".

The alarmist tone stems not only from the shock of Israel's

electoral upheaval, but from an array of dangers to which Syria now fears itself exposed. These hail from various sources — Israel, Turkey, Jordan, the US. But Syrians perceive them as linked, part of an attempt to make Damascus submit to US-Israeli designs for the region, or face a mounting campaign of pressure and harassment.

The latest in what Syria regards as an ominous series of developments came this week, when the US state department confirmed reports of several recent non-accidental explosions in Syria.

Syria's ambassador to Washington expressed "astonishment" at such allegations about a country "known for security and stability". He said it smacked of attempts to discredit Syria at a time when it sought to mobilise Arab support against the new Israeli government and Turkish aggression.

In the same category, he said, was a US intelligence report that Syria was building a secret "poison gas factory" near Aleppo. The report — revealed in Germany's Stern magazine this week — said US officials had passed satellite photographs of the plant to German officials, who were checking if Germans were involved.

Arab newspapers have

reported recent bomb blasts, speculating that Turkish agents were behind them, including one that reportedly blew up the Damascus flat of Abdullah Ocalan, the leader of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) guerrillas. Turkey — angered by, among other things, Syria's support of the PKK — recently signed a military co-operation agreement with Israel, to which Syria objected vehemently.

Now, Arab reports say, co-operation is expanding to include "counter-terrorism". They will help each other combat Syrian-supported "terror attacks from across their borders" — the PKK in Turkey's case, the Hizbullah in Israel's.

The Saudi newspaper al-Hayat also reported from Damascus this week that Turkish troops had mounted border "skirmishes and harassing operations" from Hatay province, to which Syria lays claim.

Meanwhile, Syrian-Jordanian relations are worsening. King Hussein this week implicitly accused Damascus of sponsoring terrorism inside his country. Earlier, Jordanian security services said they had arrested several terrorist suspects, mainly from Syria, who had planned about 40 attacks on Jordanian officials and Israeli tourists.

News in brief

Big French union boosts welfare reforms

FRANCE'S welfare reform plans, which sparked big public sector strikes last year, have gained fresh impetus after a leading union federation pledged to take over a large slice of the welfare system and help push change through.

The current manager of the key CNAM health insurance fund, the Force Ouvrière (FO), has been a thorn in the centre-right government's

side, spearheading crippling stoppages to block its plans late last year.

The pro-Socialist CFDT, France's biggest union federation, yesterday promised to back reforms aimed at reining in a spiralling deficit, if it succeeded in wresting control of the fund from the FO.

The CNAM has a vast annual budget of 510 billion francs (154 billion, equiva-

lent to a third of central government budget spending. Meanwhile, the national assembly yesterday approved a draft six-year defence budget bill, to accompany the most sweeping reform of the French armed forces since the second world war.

The budget, allowing \$23 billion a year of defence spending in 1997-2002, slices \$2.5 billion a year off the original budget. — Reuter.

Japan to create replica Stratford

STRATFORD-ON-AVON, the birthplace of William Shakespeare, is to be recreated as "Stratford-on-Pacific" in a Japanese seaside town.

Japanese local authorities have commissioned the British construction company Border Oak to build a Shakespeare visitors' centre in the tourist town of Maruyama, on the eastern coast of Japan, the company said yesterday.

The Shakespeare Country Park, costing \$3.5 million, will include replicas of the houses where Shakespeare was born and died, the home of his mother Mary Arden, and a theatre where the bard's plays will be performed.

Half-timbered, oak-framed buildings will recreate the atmosphere of "Ye Olde England". There will also be a tea room and an Elizabethan landscaped garden. — Reuter.

Burmese regime imposes tough law against dissent

BURMA'S military government yesterday issued a law banning all acts which disturb public order, making violators subject to up to 20 years' imprisonment.

The order, announced on state radio and television, also made unauthorised writing of a state constitution an offence subject to the same punishment.

The move was a clear response to efforts by the country's pro-democracy

movement to challenge the military's authority.

The main opposition leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, had earlier yesterday announced plans to hold her weekly meeting with supporters this weekend in defiance of a prohibition by the military regime.

Ms Suu Kyi left a message for reporters telephoning her home which said: "I will proceed with the Saturday lecture as usual." — AP.

UN on alert for refugee ship

UNITED Nations aid workers were on alert at ports along the West African coast yesterday for a Russian boat said to be crammed with around 450 refugees from Liberia.

It left Monrovia 10 days ago and may be bound for Nigeria after being turned away by Ghana and Togo. — AP.

Housing agreed as 'human right'

THE United States and developing countries, backed by Europe, agreed yesterday on the issue of housing as a human right, at the United Nations Habitat II cities summit in Istanbul.

The agreed text says there should be 14 "concrete actions that governments should take in pursuit of real-

ising adequate housing for all", the US delegation said.

The draft text falls short of obliging governments to provide the poor with housing, an issue the US had shied away from, for fear of facing legal action by homeless people.

Martin Woolfcott, page 14

A bridge too far

THE people of Geneva are set to reject plans for a new bridge or tunnel crossing one end of its picturesque lake in a referendum this week. Opponents cite environmental reasons. — Reuter.

Aid suspended

Aid agencies in Burundi yesterday began a one-week suspension of all but the most urgent work in protest at the killing of three Swiss aid workers. Hutu rebels have accused Tutsi militiamen of the killings. — Reuter.

Appeal answered

SOUTH Korea and Japan yesterday signalled that they would join the United States in responding to a UN appeal for emergency food aid for North Korea. — Reuter.

Students clash

OVER 2,000 Zambian students fought first with each other and then with police in Lusaka yesterday over the barring of the former president, Kenneth Kaunda, from running in elections. — Reuter.

Tamil ambush

TAMIL guerrillas ambushed a police patrol near the town of

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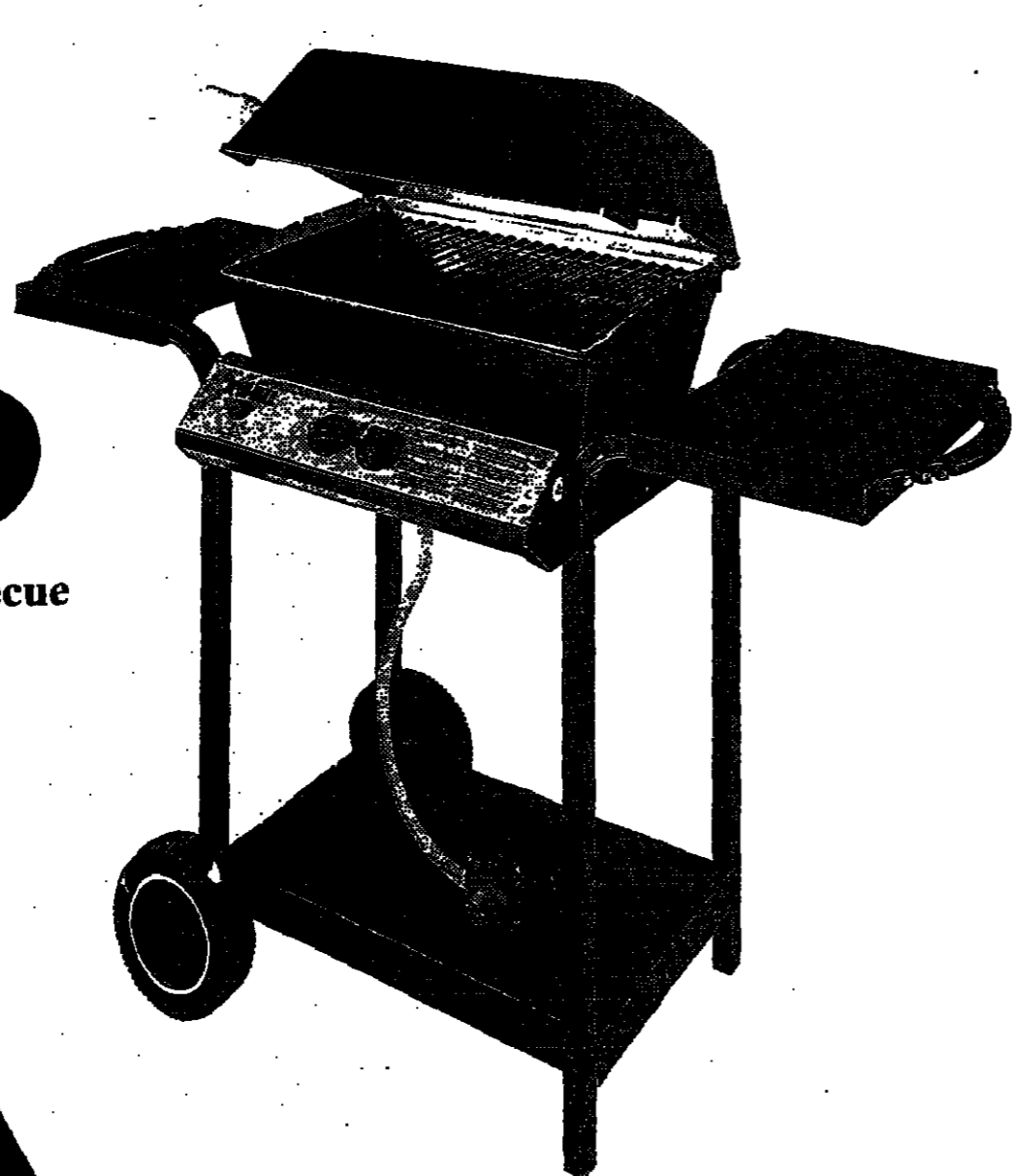
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Cricket

England v India: First Test, second day

Hussain solves problem No. 3

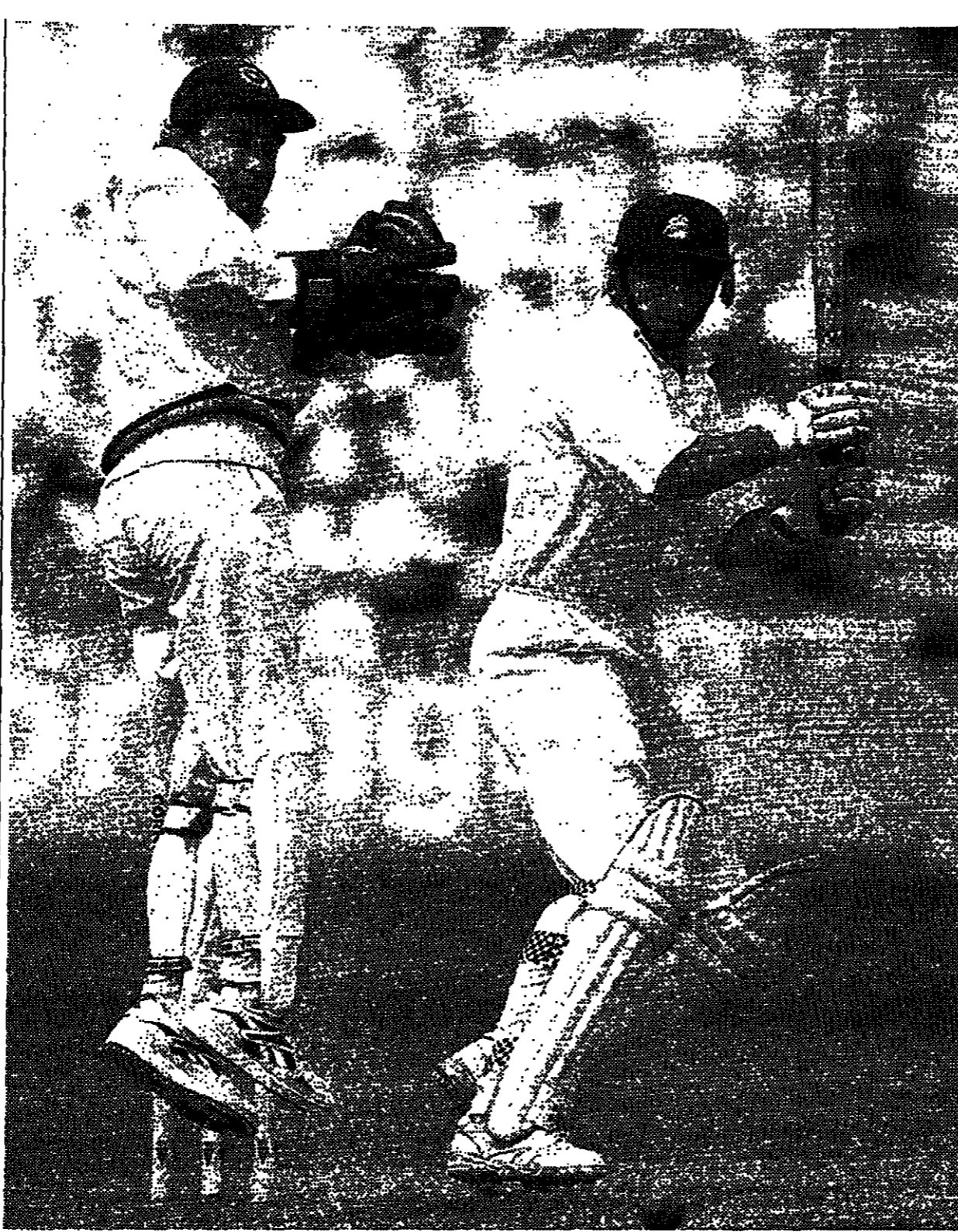
Mike Selvey at Edgbaston

QUITE bow the No. 3 position became England's equivalent of a suspect package in a mystery. As with the distant relative who turns up uninvited at a family wedding, no one has seemed to want it. Until yesterday that is, when Nasser Hussain, the man who Keith Fletcher thought was named after Dennis the Menace's dog and who young International pup frequently exhibited a similarly temperamental nature, made it his own, certainly for the foreseeable future, with a century of courage, patience and skill.

When, shortly before tea, Venkatesh Prasad removed Jack Russell, Lewis and Dominic Cork in the space of eight balls, England were 215 for eight, only one run ahead, and the odds had swung towards India. But so efficiently did Hussain nurse Min Patel and Alan Mullally, and so determinedly did this pair of debutants support him, that the last two wickets added 98 runs as he doubled his score. On a pitch that perhaps helped the bowlers more than on the first day — certainly in the morning, when the ball was hard and the surface clammy after a clear dewy night — 313, a lead of 99, was a priceless score.

India, left 17 difficult overs to bat in the evening and effectively a batsman short because of Manjrekar's ankle injury, were grateful that the light closed in after two overs. The final lap of Hussain's journey to his maiden Test in England No. 3 since Mike Gatting's emotional 117 at Adelaide two winters and 14 Tests ago, was pure theatre: an examination of nerve for batsmen and crowd.

The ninth-wicket partnership had already added 49 in just under an hour when Patel shuffled back to Kumble and was slow. Hussain needed seven more runs but first Mullally had to survive two deliveries. Hussain then swivelled to pull Srinath to the fine-leg boundary before taking a single.



Cut and run... with Mongia looking for a catch, Hussain strokes his way to a maiden Test century yesterday TOM JENKINS

he edged Mhamrekar's well-pitched outswinger to second slip. Thorpe came in, made a breezy 21 and then missed Srinath's inswinging round the wicket, then Hick was

sucked in, hooking Prasad into the finer of two men placed there for precisely that possibility. By this time Hussain had survived some exceptional bowling from Srinath, desper-

ately unlucky first thing, and with lunch gone and the pitch easing a little was beginning to expand his game, reaching 43. But it had been a battle. Ronnie Irani, though, emerged to play a pivotal un-

complicated knock, hitting 34 in as many balls, 23 of them in thumping boundaries, and crucially allowing Hussain time out, before Srinath's pace and unexpected bounce did for him.

Breath of fresh air who put wind up the Indians

David Hopps finds a light at the end of the tunnel for a former problem child

THERE are those who want to play for England and those who crave it every day of their lives. Nasser Hussain fits into the second category, which means his maiden Test hundred after an absence of nearly three years all the more gratifying.

At times it has been a turbulent journey of dark moods — one team-mate once dubbed Hussain and Mark Ramprakash "the tantrum twins" — but it is precisely such passionate qualities that now promise to serve England nobly.

"David Lloyd kept saying to me at tea, 'Keep smiling, keep breathing,'" Hussain joked after an innings that deserves to bring England victory. "I didn't know if I was trying to have a baby or get a Test hundred."

It was an appropriate image. Hussain has long nurtured this moment, at first excited by the prospect but increasingly becoming desperate for release. The liberation he found was palpable as he punched the air within his first stride, punched it some more, and gave a supportive crowd every chance to share in his emotional release.

During an uncomfortable pre-match session when the ball swung considerably and bounced unevenly, he looked little further than survival. When Ronnie Irani was hitting his run-ball 34 with great simplicity, Hussain controlled any inclinations to be excited and instead soft-pedalled for a while, collecting singles while he allowed himself time to reassess. Later, when forced to seek control, he did.

Since England's glorious period of batsmanship in the mid-1980s, when even the Australians received a trouncing, only Athey, Stewart, Hick, Gatting and Gower have scored a century at No. 3. If Hussain's installation seemed a case of giving a problem position to a one-time problem child, he immediately came up with a solution.

Hussain is a dedicated individual and Michael Atherton, for one, will appreciate his intelligence, his nous and his bloody-minded desire. Yesterday, after his 128, much of England felt the same way.

Championship: Leicestershire v Kent

Ben makes it big

Paul Weaver at Leicester

THE pitch here wears a grinning death mask. It produced good cricket for two testing days but it died yesterday, confounding everyone, and the match suddenly looked very tired.

A surface that, according to some Kent players on Wednesday, would not last three days now looks good for a week. The captains will have to get their heads together this morning if a result is to be ragged from it.

Ben Smith went on to make a career-best 174 not out. It took this normally minibus-sized player eight hours 40 minutes. Some have questioned his ability, coming in first wicket down, to play a long innings. There can be no such doubts now.

Kent got rid of Parsons quickly enough but then Smith and Pearson added 89 for the ninth wicket. The Kent innings was a little different. Fleming has been only a mixed success opening in the championship in place of Mark Benson this season, with 173 runs in eight innings and only one fifty.

Somerset v Warwickshire

Lee's run-out lightning strikes twice

David Foot at Taunton

MARCUS TRECSCOTHICK and Shane Lee fielded side by side in the slips yesterday afternoon. They had much to talk about. It involved a variation of Sod's Law at the crease. Trecscothick, the sturdy left-hander paying his way back into the firm which made him look one of our best young batsmen, had earlier in the day been run out by Lee.

lian. The dismissals were cruelly identical. This talented pair had added 97 for the fifth wicket in a manner that must have been immensely pleasurable to the Somerset faithful. Then Lee executed another stylish straight drive, deflected by the bowler, Welch on to the stumps with Trecscothick caught backing up.

Trecscothick was out for 34, going on 50 at least. Lee, after a succession of boundaries on both sides of the wicket, perfect in their timing and simplicity, went for 85, particularly well caught low down at extra cover by Brown. Suddenly the likelihood of a substantial first-innings lead was disappearing. Welch took two wickets in an over, including that of Rose first ball.

Essex v Lancashire

Lloyd streams his way to a first double century

Andy Wilson at Chelmsford

WHAT David Lloyd would have given to join his former Lancashire opening partner Barry Wood here yesterday. Not that the England coach had a bad day at Edgbaston, but whereas Wood senior saw his son Nathan fail on his first-Test debut, Lloyd's lead Graham hit a spectacular double century, the first of his career.

It included the fastest hundred of the season — off 70 balls; the second took him 71 balls — and he ended unbeaten on 227. Lloyd's innings was the more remarkable as Lancashire had been 55 for three at one stage, still 305 away from avoiding the follow-on, and he had been streaming with hay fever all morning.

Despite having only two previous championship centuries to his name, he set the tone when getting off the mark by taking a four and two sixes off an over from Peter Such. By the end of the day he had belted 12 sixes, a Lancashire record. The dozen included two lost balls, one in a garden and the other at the bottom of the River Cam.

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Scoreboard section containing cricket scores for various matches including Surrey v Kent, Leicestershire v Warwickshire, and other regional fixtures.

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DERBY DAY

Dushyantor has the classic stamp

EXPERIENCE, it is said, is the best teacher. When it comes to the Derby there are three trainers represented at Epsom today who have certainly learnt a thing or two about what it takes to win British Flat racing's most coveted prize...

'Over this extra two furlongs, he is confidently expected to beat Glory Of Dancer this time.'

this far. The slowest of learners this Sadler's Wells colt made hard work of winning his only race last year and has suffered problems with cracks to his feet which necessitated the insertion of screws in three of his hooves. If all this sounds alarming it's worth recalling that Cecil faced serious problems with Reference Point in the spring of 1987 before he came through to follow up the stable's Derby success with Slip Anchor two years earlier...

part of the process begun in the Dante Stakes at York — traditionally one of the best Derby trials. But what is usually an informative race was marred by a slow gallop, and make matters worse for Dushyantor he was given a poor ride, held up well of the pace before being asked to quicken in a sprint to the line.

That he was able to get within half a length of the more experienced winner, Glory Of Dancer, speaks volumes for Dushyantor's ability. Like Commander In Chief, he is improving with each race and, over this extra two furlongs, is confidently expected to beat Glory Of Dancer this time.

Jack Jennings, allowed to dictate a modest gallop, was almost certainly flattered to finish third in the Dante, two places ahead of Double Leaf, with Storm Trooper sixth. Storm Trooper is an interesting second string for Cecil, having made short work of St Mawes and Jack Jennings over nine furlongs at Newmarket in April. With hindsight, it was a mistake to run him in the 2,000 Guineas.

St Mawes, though, should be a different proposition over this distance. Whereas Storm Trooper was trained to the minute at Newmarket, John Dunlop's colt is only now starting to find his feet.

Dunlop, trainer of Derby winners Shirley Heights and Erhaab, reckons he has St Mawes in better shape now than at any stage this season. Things did not go right for St Mawes at Goodwood last time, when he stayed on to take third place behind Don Micheletto — subsequently fourth in the French Derby. He may not be quick enough to win today, but is sure to be going on at the finish.

Backers still reeling from the setbacks to Nash House and Dr Masini may be tempted to write off Alhaarth, who was Derby favourite throughout the winter. But a closer look at this season's efforts suggests this is not the time to give up on him.

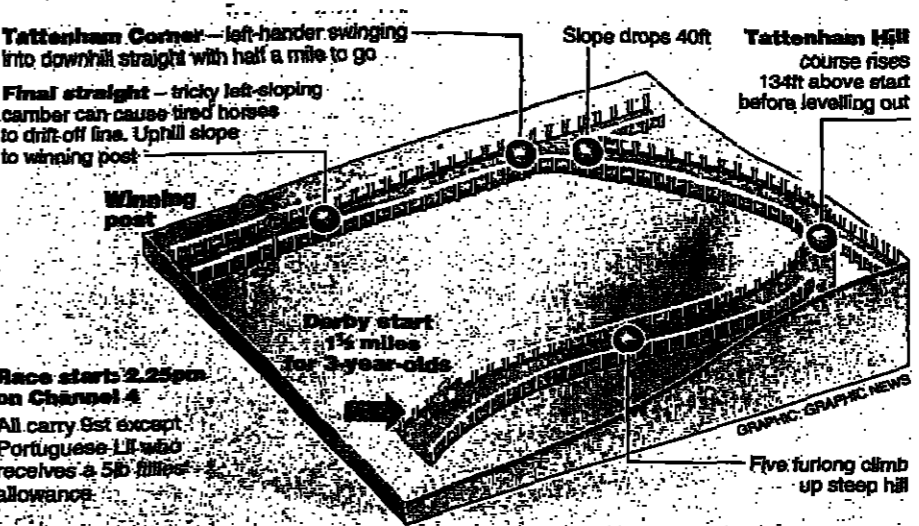
In a small field for the Craven Stakes Alhaarth refused to settle and was beaten a neck by Beauchamp King. Alhaarth struggled to finish fourth in the 2,000 Guineas, over six lengths behind close second Even Top. But in doing so he turned the Craven Stakes tables on Beauchamp King and had been drawn near the favoured stands rails, the outcome would have been a lot different. The effect of the draw that day cannot be understated. The ground was lengths slower in the centre of the track, where Alhaarth "won" his race. He should turn the form round with Even Top. There has been a lot of talk about Shaamit, but on his first outing of the season he has it all to do. I go for Dushyantor to beat Alhaarth. St Mawes can stay on for third.

Today's racecards, page 8

Acharne 28 Days since latest outing. No. 5 Form: 428-102. Trainer: C. Brittain. Jockey: W. O'Connor. Owner: P. J. O'Brien. Easy winner of a minor race at Doncaster in March, but withdrawn when he was sent to Newmarket for the Derby. He has since shown signs of improvement in the Dante and the Tattenham Corner.

Alhaarth 35 No. 2 Form: 111-24. Trainer: W. Harty. Jockey: W. Cannon. Owner: Mrs. A. J. M. M. M. Top two-year-old of 1995 when unbeaten in five races. Disappointing fourth, beaten six lengths, in 2,000 Guineas but was not a bad draw. News from recent races suggests he has regained some of his old sparkle.

Busy Flight 42 No. 3 Form: 022-6. Trainer: B. Hills. Jockey: C. Aguirre. Owner: Mrs. S. Wingfield. Best effort when runner-up to Randlewood Ridge in Herts Hill Stakes at Newbury last autumn. Ten lengths behind Glory Of Dancer when they were second and sixth to Sandilham in Treacher Classic Trial at Sandown.



Chief Contender 23 No. 1 Form: 1-1-1-1-1. Trainer: P. J. O'Brien. Jockey: P. J. O'Brien. Owner: P. J. O'Brien. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Classic Eagle 32 No. 1 Form: 1-1-1-1-1. Trainer: W. Harty. Jockey: W. Cannon. Owner: Mrs. A. J. M. M. M. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Clever Cliche 36 No. 1 Form: 1-1-1-1-1. Trainer: A. C. C. Jockey: W. Cannon. Owner: Mrs. A. J. M. M. M. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Double Leaf 24 No. 2 Form: 1-1-1-1-1. Trainer: B. Hills. Jockey: C. Aguirre. Owner: Mrs. S. Wingfield. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Dushyantor 24 No. 2 Form: 1-1-1-1-1. Trainer: W. Harty. Jockey: W. Cannon. Owner: Mrs. A. J. M. M. M. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Even Top 35 No. 9 Form: 51212-4. Trainer: M. Tompkins. Jockey: P. Robinson. Owner: Mr. B. Schmidt-Bogner. Not classically bred but a colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Glory Of Dancer 23 No. 1 Form: 1-1-1-1-1. Trainer: P. J. O'Brien. Jockey: P. J. O'Brien. Owner: P. J. O'Brien. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Jack Jennings 24 No. 1 Form: 1-1-1-1-1. Trainer: W. Harty. Jockey: W. Cannon. Owner: Mrs. A. J. M. M. M. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Mystic Knight 28 No. 1 Form: 1-1-1-1-1. Trainer: A. C. C. Jockey: W. Cannon. Owner: Mrs. A. J. M. M. M. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Prince Of My Heart 32 No. 1 Form: 1-1-1-1-1. Trainer: B. Hills. Jockey: C. Aguirre. Owner: Mrs. S. Wingfield. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Shaamit 217 No. 1 Form: 1-1-1-1-1. Trainer: W. Haggas. Jockey: M. Hills. Owner: Mr. K. D. D. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Shantou 11 No. 15 Form: 321. Trainer: J. Gosden. Jockey: L. Dettori. Owner: Sheikh Mohammed. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Spartan Heartbeat 16 No. 1 Form: 1-1-1-1-1. Trainer: P. J. O'Brien. Jockey: P. J. O'Brien. Owner: P. J. O'Brien. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

St Mawes 18 No. 1 Form: 1-1-1-1-1. Trainer: W. Harty. Jockey: W. Cannon. Owner: Mrs. A. J. M. M. M. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Storm Trooper 24 No. 1 Form: 1-1-1-1-1. Trainer: B. Hills. Jockey: C. Aguirre. Owner: Mrs. S. Wingfield. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Tasdid 28 No. 1 Form: 1-1-1-1-1. Trainer: A. C. C. Jockey: W. Cannon. Owner: Mrs. A. J. M. M. M. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Zaforum 28 No. 1 Form: 1-1-1-1-1. Trainer: L. Monaghan Hill. Jockey: D. O'Neill. Owner: The Forum Ltd. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Portuguese Lii 18 No. 21 Form: 506-05. Trainer: D. Nicholls. Jockey: Alex Greaves. Owner: Mr. D. W. A colt who has won all his races and is expected to be a strong contender in the Derby.

Table listing horses and their odds: 200-1 Tasdid, 200-1 Classic Eagle, 200-1 Spartan Heart Beat, 1000-1 Portuguese Lii.

Hot weather. High pressure. Good ground. Now for the Storm. (Storm Trooper's Derby: 6/1.) Call 0990 524 524

Bookies go 1,000-1 against Ms Greaves and her filly

ALEX GREAVES becomes the first woman in the 217-year history of the Derby to ride in the premier classic when she partners Portuguese Lii, writes Chris Hawkins. The enormity of her task is summed up by the bookies' odds of 1,000-1, although Portuguese Lii, a filly, has attracted interest, with Ladbrokes taking a 2400 bet on her.

William Hill rate her 10-1 to finish in the first 10, and 100-1 to be in the first three. Alex cauterised Portuguese Lii around Tattenham Corner yesterday and was calmness personified afterwards, saying: "To me this is a job. I do it every day. But to everyone else it is a big thing, although by the time of the race I'll probably be a bag of nerves."

Today's extra half-mile should suit Portuguese Lii, but her participation is regarded by most racing professionals as a joke. "The only way that horse could win is if at halfway it cut across the middle," said Geoff Lewis. "But since they've closed the Great Met track which used to run across the Downs, it can't even do that."

Rugby Union

Wales hope to catch Wallabies on hop

Wales today revisit the scene of their greatest humiliation when they face Australia at Ballymore. Five years ago, they left here having been thrashed 63-6, a defeat that would have been 75-6 in today's scoring. Wales may have recovered from those dark, desperate days but, their defeats 69-30 by Australian Capital Territory on Sunday and 27-20 by a weak New South Wales side three days later mean the Wallabies are 25-1 on. Australia's coach Greg Smith yesterday admitted that he knew very little about them.

Wales are to give themselves a chance they have to raise the pace of their game, said Alex Evans, the former Wales coach who is now Australia's technical director. Ever since they started touring 32 years ago Wales have returned from the southern hemisphere pleading to learn lessons, and this trip has been no different. The Welsh Rugby Union's director of rugby Terry Coburn has called for a provincial competition in Britain along the lines of the Super 12.

Sport in brief

Hockey: Powerful shots by the left-winger Nick Thompson and the centre-half Kalbir Takhar saw Britain beat Canada 2-1 at Bialham yesterday, their third win in four days, writes Pat Rowley. Britain conceded the first goal as Canada scored from their one and only corner of the first half when Alan Brahmist fired a rebound past the unsuspecting goalkeeper David Luckes on 28 minutes — though the home side's passing moves had already created so many chances that the match should have been sewn up by then. Motorcycling: The Australian world champion Michael Doohan seeks his third consecutive 500cc victory in Europe when the French GP returns to the Le Castellet circuit for the first time in five years tomorrow. The Ulsterman Philip McCallen became the first rider in Isle of Man TT history to win four races in a week when he dominated both the Production and Senior events as the festival ended yesterday, winning the six-lap blue-ribbon race by 72sec from the veteran TT rider Joey Dunlop.

Ladbrokes THE VODAFONE DERBY. 0990 524 524. Includes list of horses and odds.

RACELINE table with columns for horse names and numbers, and rows for various race results.

Derby runners and riders: full details on page 11

SportsGuardian

Christie shows Bailey scant respect

Duncan Mackay

LONDON CHRISTIE gave Donovan Bailey, the man who succeeded him as the world 100 metres champion, a quick lesson in respect when he handed the Canadian a thorough beating in Nuremberg last night, a victory that will surely convince him to defend his Olympic title.

In their first meeting since Bailey so incensed him in January by suggesting Christie was acting when he collapsed clutching his hamstring at the finish of the World Championship final in Gothenburg last year, the Briton won easily in 10.06sec.

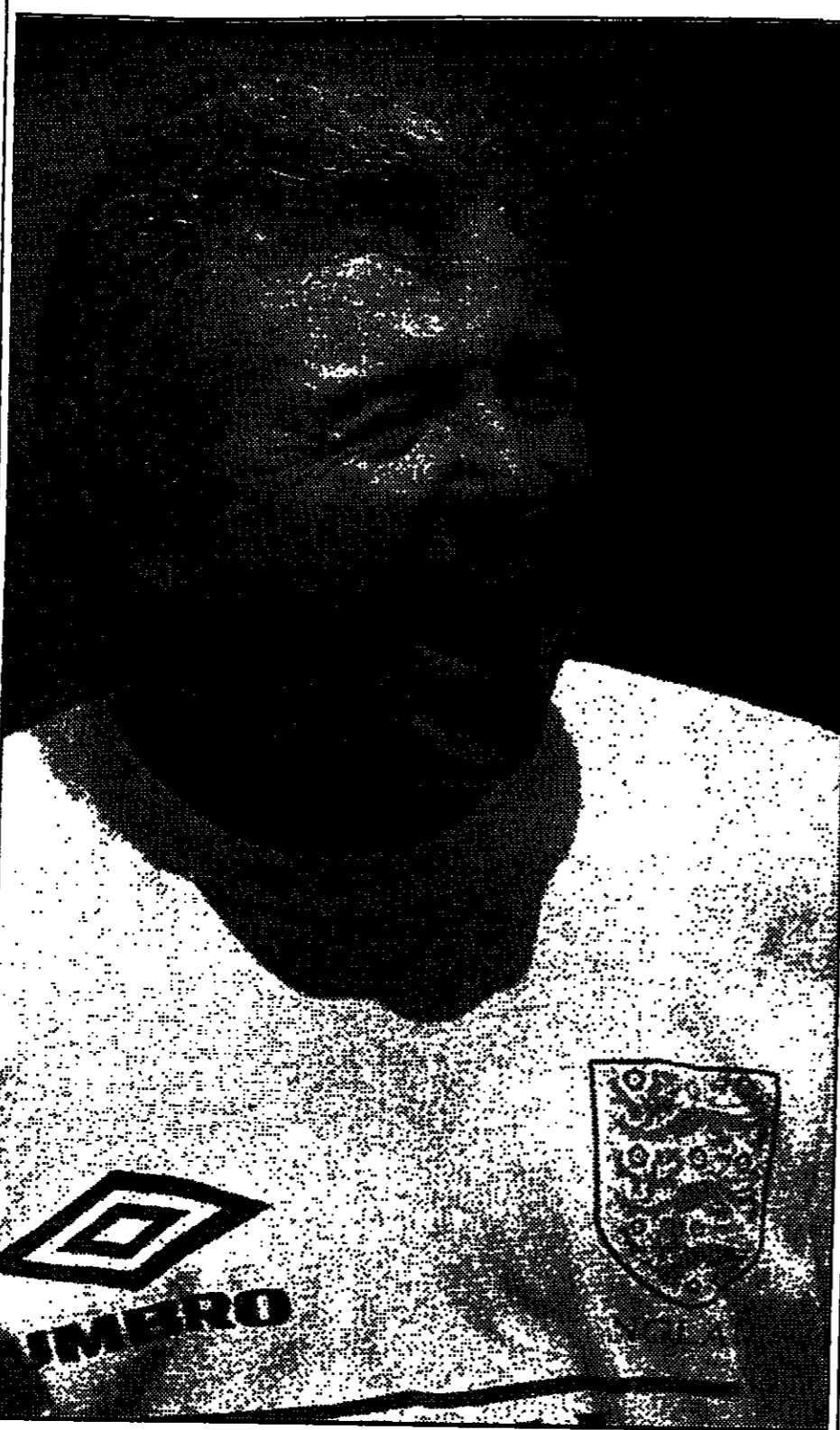
"Absolutely no one was injured in that race," Bailey had said. "My opinion, and the opinion of the competitors I know, is that no one was injured." Christie was so angry he threatened to sue Bailey.

But last night the Olympic champion lapped up the crowd's applause in the Frankensstadion, clearly delighted at the sharp riposte he had delivered to the main favourite to succeed him in Atlanta.

Christie, who had himself paid the price for coming out of his blocks too slowly against Dennis Mitchell in Rome two nights earlier, was away much quicker on this occasion while Bailey was cursing himself for a wretched start and finished second, 0.03 down.

Sally Gunnell's Olympic hopes took a knock when she finished third in 56.03sec in the 400m hurdles behind Germany's Heike Meissner and Jamaica's Debbie-Ann Parris.

VENABLES' MEN READY TO TAKE THE EURO STAGE



Laugh with the lions... Terry Venables was in relaxed mood yesterday



The race is almost on... Scotland's squad warm up for Holland at Stratford-upon-Avon yesterday

MARK THOMPSON

England can take a lead with captain Adams



David Lacey

ENGLAND will open the 1996 European Championship today looking for hope rather than glory. One thing at a time. The glory will have to wait.

So will David Platt, unless the rumour are wrong. Captain on Monday, back-bencher come Saturday, all the signs are that he will be left out against Switzerland this afternoon so that Gareth Southgate can re-establish with Tony Adams the centre-back partnership that looked so promising against China in Beijing a fortnight ago.

If Adams is not captain today he was certainly giving a very good impression of one yesterday as he described the way he would be going round the dressing room before the match "motivating those who need to be motivated and

calming down those who need calming down. What needs to be done I will do." This was the captain speaking, not the first mate.

In one sense the likely omission of Platt defies logic. He is England's leading scorer with roughly a goal every two games. Alan Shearer has not scored for England in nearly two seasons. Then again, if a central midfielder has to be sacrificed Platt is the obvious choice. The Pauls Ince and Gascoigne are now more fundamental to England's needs.

An alternative would be to drop Steve McManaman, who has been giving England important width on the left wing, albeit right-footed. This, however, would not only narrow the attack but disturb the team's balance.

Either way it appears that Venables has, initially at any rate, given up the idea of a three-man defence pivoting on Adams. He knows that the first requirement of a major tournament is not to lose the opening match, and the immediate exposure of Adams to Grassi, Siorza and Turkylmaz is probably not something he is prepared to risk.

Had a computer been asked to come up with ideal opponents for England at Wembley this afternoon it would probably have produced Switzerland, a team good enough

to test early English optimism but beatable all the same.

As England coach, Venables goes on trial today after 2 1/2 years preparing his case. His term has been more notable for events off field than on it; with no need to qualify, perhaps this was inevitable.

A quick rather than deep thinker, Venables should be in his element once the tournament has begun. He is nothing if not a good organiser and improviser, an astute manipulator of players and a keen observer of opposition weaknesses.

Yesterday he looked distinctly more relaxed than either of his two predecessors, Bobby Robson and Graham Taylor, on the eve of a tournament. He was guardedly optimistic, he believed the team had improved under his guidance and had as good a chance as anybody. Changes were hinted at against Scotland and Holland "even if it is going well".

Switzerland, he warned, were well organised with good pedigrees. Their coach Artur Jorge had a distinguished record. "The Swiss aren't going to come here to roll over," he concluded, perfectly straight-faced.

Venables's England are not a bad-looking side but they are unproven competitively. This afternoon's match is unlikely to see them at their

best. In fact it would be a cause for concern if today turned out to be the best England have to offer.

Yet if England win today it will be hard to see them not qualifying for the quarter-finals. The next task, then, would be to ensure they head Group A and stay at Wembley.

There is a possibility the group will be decided by goals rather than points. It is important, therefore, that England achieve a rhythm of creating and taking chances as soon as possible. Until Venables's attack scored six all together against Hungary and China the regularity with which opportunities were being missed was worrying. Switzerland were beaten 3-1 at Wembley in a friendly last November and a similar win today is not beyond Venables's team. If Shearer is among the scorers then so much the better for England's prospects.

A flurry of goals from Shearer over the next three weeks and the idea of England winning the European Championship will become something more than a nice thought. A hat-trick today and hope and glory may begin to look synonymous.

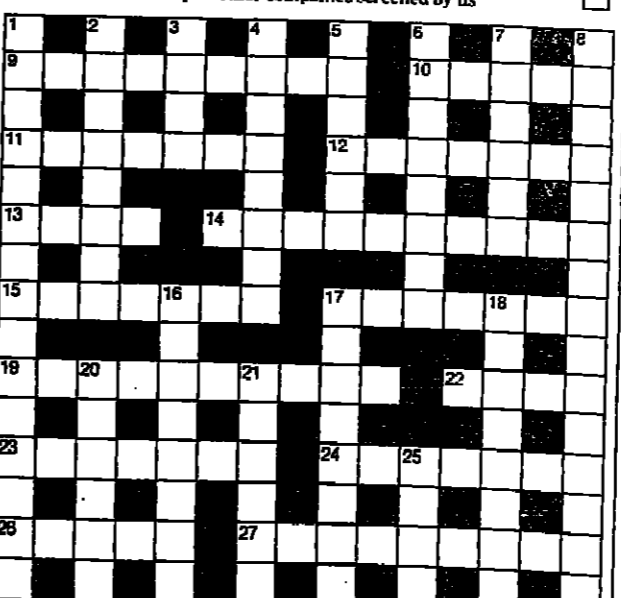
ENGLAND (probable): Seaman; G Neville, Adams, Southgate, Pearce; Anderton, Gascoigne, Ince, McManaman, Sheringham, Shearer.

Guardian COLLINS Crossword 20,674

A copy of the Collins English Dictionary will be sent to the first five correct entries drawn. Entries to Guardian Crossword No 20,674, P.O. Box 315, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 2AX, by first post on Friday. Solution and winners in the Guardian on Monday June 17.

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Set by Araucaria

Across

- 9 Oprah's revelation to dialectician rendered brother speechless (5,4)
- 10 Savimbi's lot's in - run it again (5)
- 11 Arrive without dog to race? (7)
- 12 Sat after work on the other side (7)
- 13 Love 3's returned (4)
- 14 Bad lad interrupts the best bits subject to clipping (10)
- 15 The membrane, being on the back, disconcerts callers (7)
- 17 Look after mother without talking (4,3)

19 Nothing comes back (3,7)

22 Mountain height and river in poem (4)

23 Conviving associates of 14 (7)

24 Absurd person on part of course with part of primate (7)

25 Strike marks time (5)

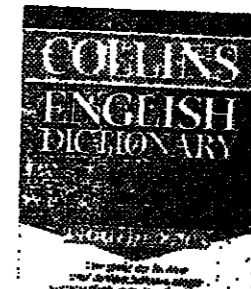
27 6! Out of goal without 13? (5-4)

Down

1 Snack with yellow port for smart lad in Rolls? (7,8)

2 Rub-a-dub, funny inside and out (4,4)

3 Dominant and supertonic are painful (4)



4 Prosper, having food and water supply (8)

5 Nothing to vote for - degree at university (6)

6 Catch unawares, sometimes repeated (8)

7 Companion of Christopher is not in the best of taste (6)

8 2,4,5,6,18,20 and 26, bitten and twice shy in poem (5,10)

16 Grain measures or punt poles (associated with M. Spark's Ballad?) (8)

17 Sort heather from firewood (8)

18 I left one sailor among my soldiers (6)

20 Student attached to fellow at university (6)

21 Conviction of danger? (6)

25 Uses money of foreign country (4)



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Outlook page 17

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Saturday June 8
Sunday June 9
1996
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The Guardian Outlook

REACHING FOR HIS WALLET
Moscow, May 20: amnesty for state factories that haven't paid taxes - worth \$5-\$10 billion



Vorkuta, May 25: pledges \$25 million for economic aid to the region, and \$1 million for children's holidays



Grozny, May 27: signs decree that will end conscription in Russian army by the year 2000. Cost incalculable



Will the wad win it for Boris?

Roll up, roll up! Russia's president is doling out roubles and decrees by the handful to buy votes and stay in power. And it's working, says DAVID HEARST
Photomontage by ROGER TOOTH



fears of a change of power. In an old anecdote from Gogol's time, a wise landlord sits on his balcony drinking tea. He is surrounded by mosquitoes and his servant asks the master whether he can brush them off. "No," replies the landlord, "because those that are on my skin have had enough of my blood, while newcomers will want to drink again." In Soviet times, this became used in a joke about the one-party system: "Why do we have only one party? Because we can't afford to feed two."
Yeltsin is beating a drum which only the native Russians can hear. Yes, his campaign team says, my men have grabbed their dachas, their cars, their stakes in privatised business, and made their mistakes. If you allow Zyuganov to power, his men will do the same thing. Better to leave the same elite in power because they, like the mosquitoes, have already been fed.

BORIS Yeltsin wraps this iron message in a velvet glove. He has forgotten his tennis-playing past and has settled comfortably into old age. He is a grandfather now, posing as a normal Russian having to till the soil in his allotment to make ends meet. We are told by him that "my family and I are collecting 10 sacks of potatoes from my garden". Not content to stretch credulity to its limits, Grandfather Yeltsin goes on: "I am buying milk for my grandsons from Yuri Luzhkov's cows." Yuri Luzhkov is the mayor of Moscow.

Naina, Yeltsin's wife, has also been carefully packaged. A first lady of Russia, she is not. The two Russian women who ventured into Hillary Clinton's role did so at their peril and neither could withstand the shockwave of hatred from their Russian sisters - Raisa Gorbacheva, the most spectacular victim of this venom, and more recently Ludmilla Narusova, wife of Anatoli Sobchak, the ousted mayor of St Petersburg.

From outer space bobs over the heads of the throng, the first sign that Boris Yeltsin is approaching. The streetwise voice growls and clucks. He is one of them. Then comes the familiar shock of silver hair, the red face, and the eyes buried in deep trenches under many layers of jowly skin. A frisson ripples through the moving scrum, and all sorts of improbable supplicants are caught in its epicentre. A girl, aged 17, in a white blouse and prim bouffant, who says, somewhat alarmingly, that she "represents the future" presses flowers into the hands of Boris. There's a long pause. The black box crackles into life. "I married too early, huh, huh, huh," says the voice. The presidential entourage, all men, mimic the presidential leer. Then come the handouts. Two harvesters and a car for a group of Chechen villagers; three billion roubles to build a new church in Stavropol; 60 billion roubles for electronic factories in Zelenograd, 133 billion roubles for the miners

in Vorkuta. Nobody can keep count. With one week left before the first free elections ever for a Russian head of state, President Yeltsin has just completed a whirlwind tour of the country. He has distributed election promises like confetti. Every few steps of his walkabout, another pledge is made. It's even worse with the decrees. They are signed on the side of an armoured personnel carrier in Grozny, or entrance to a mine shaft. Yeltsin visits a museum in Archangelsk and immediately signs a decree about giving more money to museums. He visits a nuclear submarine shipyard and, hey presto, Russia gets another nuclear submarine. Projects rusting in dormant neglect suddenly come back to life. Peter the Great, a nuclear powered 25,000-ton cruiser lying idle for five years, 80 per cent complete, is suddenly finished. The way this burst of decree-making has been worded makes clear that it is all for

electoral show, with no real chance of becoming law. The miners in Vorkuta, the Afghan vets in Volgograd, the electronic workers of Zelenograd all know that when the president disappears into his armoured Zil with a final wave, so do their chances of getting their claims back on the political agenda. Why then does all this work? When Boris Yeltsin began his campaign for re-election in February, he was in the worst position imaginable. He had just returned to work two months after his second heart attack, when a bungled Chechen commando raid on a Russian military airfield led to a second hostage-taking drama and a new national emergency. Yeltsin was caught like a rabbit in headlights. He was seen to be weak, out of touch and cruel. His rating was 9 per cent. He was unelectable. Yet today, practically all the polls have Yeltsin leading over his main challenger, the communist leader Gennady Zyuganov.

The comeback kid of Russian politics has risen from his political grave. He is slimmer, energetic and off the booze. His reactions are quick. He has travelled the length and breadth of this vast country. He is on every television news broadcast, on all channels, both public and private. He is in fact running a mastery campaign. FOR political scientists who know their trade, Yeltsin's campaign strategy has been simple and effective. He held his hands up to the mistakes he made such as launching the war in Chechnya and liberalising prices so quickly that millions of Russians lost all their savings. He acknowledges that factories are at a standstill. All he says is that under the communists it would be worse. "If people are convinced that the evil you are fighting is an absolute and eternal one, you are absolved," says Professor

the same thought this way: "As it is impossible to prove that Boris Yeltsin is good, after everything that has happened in the country, his campaign managers are trying to prove that the opposition is extremely bad." First stop on the propaganda offensive is television. Old nomenklatura placemen, the people who had long experience of serving as their master's voice, are in charge of state TV, NTV, the independent channel that Rupert Murdoch has shown interest in, had to be dealt with slightly differently. It had a tradition of independent reporting, especially from Chechnya. It carried two kiss-and-tell interviews with Vyacheslav Kostikov, the acerbic press secretary Yeltsin had just fired, who said to the delight of all: "His only love and passion is power." The initial reaction to television's growing independence was a clumsy one, reminiscent of how the Party dealt with dissenting art in the seventies. A mysterious bulldozer de-

channel's director, announced he was joining Yeltsin's campaign team. Since then all Russian television has been crammed with supportive messages, none of them too subtle. This is the perfect time for catching up on all those Gulag films you missed, because the small screen is full of them. "When I switch on the TV I have the impression that Stalin died yesterday, not 40 years ago," one journalist wrote. The small doses of Gennady Zyuganov, trying as hard as possible to sound moderate, reasonable and peaceful, are sandwiched by heavy political commentary. It is almost as if the Zyuganov message is carried with an Official Government Health Warning. The only place for Zyuganov to go unchallenged is on local television. Then there is the message that the Kremlin puts out. Anatoli Chubais, the sacked privatisation minister, talked of "civil war" if the communists came back to power. Similar scaremongering argu-

Meanwhile, there is a real war, forgotten by the international community, going on inside Russia, one that has claimed more than 30,000 lives. Last week Yeltsin boasted in Grozny: "There is no more war in Chechnya. I have brought you peace. There are only small separate groups of bandits." The broken promises are almost incidental. Very few, least of all Russia's five million new small businessmen, believe Yeltsin when he said in Tver this week: "If we don't make a mistake on June 18, if we continue along the way we have chosen, the improvement will begin in one year." A familiar theme this. On October 28, 1991 Yeltsin promised the pain would last "about half a year". In Autumn 1992, he pretended to see the first signs of increasing production. The campaign team and its propaganda machine are using these gaffes to their own advantage, by putting out the line that the president can't change horses in mid-stream. In this they are playing on ancient

the cynicism of these statements is extraordinary. Yeltsin's government is unable to pay its workers' wages, raiding the Central Bank reserves and thus printing money. And yet he keeps on promising gifts that he knows he cannot pay. The financial handover left from the election will be huge, at best delaying economic stabilisation for a year, at worst making another collapse of the rouble more likely. Boris Yeltsin pays no heed to this. All that is left of his many intermissions - communist boss, democrat, nationalist, and now vegetable-growing grandfather - is the image of a Tsar, sometimes kind, sometimes cruel, clinging on to the one thing he knows best: the uses and abuses of power.

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Quality plus equality

ONE political party is already in turmoil over education. No, not Labour but the Tory party, with the chairman of the Conservative Party reported to be in despair over the Education Secretary's failure to put Labour on the defensive on schools. But is Labour due to divide too following Tony Blair's blasphemy yesterday with respect to the old socialist comprehensive catechism? He not only reversed hallowed principles — pledging instead a presumption in favour of grouping children by attainment unless schools can demonstrate they can succeed with mixed ability teaching — but also wanted setting by ability introduced much earlier in secondary schools and across more subjects. In his words: "If setting is best in measurable subjects (maths and science) shouldn't it be applied too in less easily measured subjects like history and English?"

Some fundamentalists within the party will be upset. Any criticism of comprehensives is regarded by them as a political apostasy. But there is no point in reformers burying their heads in the

school sandpit. The Labour leader was not abandoning the comprehensive system but setting out ways in which it could be improved. He was right to talk about the uneven performance of schools and their failure to meet the goals set by Labour in the 1990s: to widen the high standards set by grammar schools and increase the ladders of opportunity for bright children from poor families. One only has to look at successive reports from school inspectors over the last decade to see how far short the schools have fallen. This year's annual report showed the gap between best and the worst even wider than ever: the most successful comprehensives achieving GCSE results twice as good as others in similar socio-economic circumstances and six times better than those achieved by the least successful in less favoured areas. Labour was right to strive for a fairer education system but Blair is right to insist that "equality must not become the enemy of quality".

So Labour will take into account that different children move at different speeds and have differing abilities. To do otherwise does "give idealism a bad name". The children who have suffered the most in the last 30 years are the most disadvantaged: about 20 per cent of 16-year-olds fail to achieve any qualifications in English or maths. The 11 plus will not be reintroduced but setting by ability will be pushed. Most teachers will support these moves. They have already adopted such an approach with over 70 per cent of post 14-year-olds in English grouped by ability, over 80 per cent in science and modern language, and 90 per

cent in maths. This was one reason why there was so little fuss from the teaching unions when David Blunkett earlier this year signalled his intention of looking at every sacred cow including decoupling mixed-ability teaching from the comprehensive goal.

The Tories do not know how to handle these overt Labour signals. They are angry with their Education Secretary for suggesting Labour is stealing Tory policies. In the words of one senior Tory quoted in this week's Telegraph: "We don't want her saying they are stealing our clothes because that is tantamount to endorsing their policies." Instead, Tory party leaders seem intent on moving even further to the right with the Prime Minister insisting on the introduction of nursery school vouchers, eager to push more selection in all schools, and foolishly promising a grammar school in every town. Mrs Shephard will not thank us for our support but she has done her best to stem the ideological idiocies of the far right even though she has been frequently over-ridden by the Prime Minister. Labour will be laughing all the way to the polls. The idea that the electorate will rally to Tory calls for more selection rather than Labour demands for higher standards could only be believed by a government which has lost touch with the people. Can the Tories really have forgotten what happened to the hapless John Patten when he tried to politicise education reform? Concentrating on the top 20 per cent of children was a mistaken approach 30 years ago. Trying to resuscitate it now would be monumental folly.

Moving the winning post

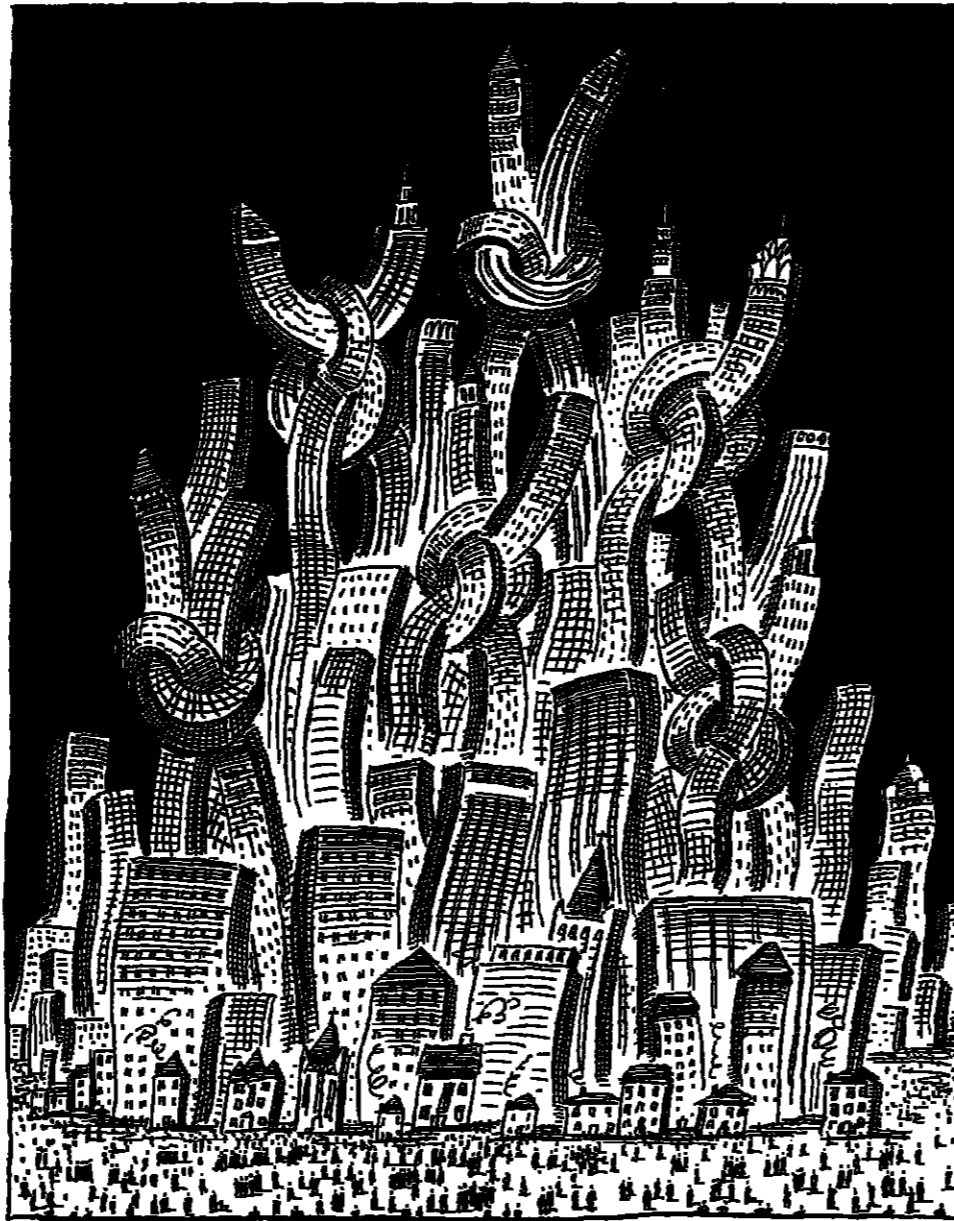
TODAY is Derby Day. Except, of course, that it isn't. Everyone knows that Derby Day ought to be a Wednesday — the first Wednesday in June — as it has been since most people can remember. Until last year, that is, when the marketing men changed it in the name of progress. Is nothing sacred? The staging of one of the world's greatest horse races on a Wednesday had become a revered national ritual. People who never normally bet had an innocent flutter on the office sweepstake. It simply isn't the same when you have to wait until Monday morning to find out who has won. On Derby Wednesday, offices would stop working for five minutes without any obvious loss of productivity, assembly lines would be temporarily neglected, and the Houses of Parliament even less well attended than usual as people took time off for a rare moment of national bonding. The roads to Epsom were jammed with people taking time off from work often under the guise of corporate entertaining.

The Derby is quintessentially British and not just because we are an inveterate nation of gamblers. It is because, like giving blood, it is a free activity for the tens of thousands of people who stand on the Downs, even though numbers have been falling in recent years. The race is also run along distances with a sense of history — one mile, four fur-

longs and 10 yards. Even as we write, there is probably a committee in Brussels planning to convert all this to kilometres and decimal parts thereof. They must be resisted at all costs. The race hasn't been immune to change. In a genuflection to the digital age it is now sponsored by Vodafone and the Downs will play host to huge screens to enable punters to watch sports events happening elsewhere. Doubtless its name will soon be changed from the Derby Stakes to the Derby Stakeholders in order to keep up with the times. But despite all this, the race itself — and the unforgettable sound of hoofs thundering along grass — have remained unchanged over the decades. This year will have the added attraction of the first woman jockey (Alex Greaves on the 500 to 1 outsider, Portuguese Lil) ever to ride in the Derby.

Last year's switch to Saturday wasn't the success hoped for. Corporate entertaining dropped, and the amount laid in bets fell from £35 million to £28 million. This year's race coincides with the first day of the European Cup when England play Switzerland (a fact unknown to the organisers when they fixed the date). It is beginning to look as though Someone-Up-There isn't looking too kindly on Saturdays and the authorities ought to take the hint. Even now it isn't too late to recant and move the Derby back from the crowded weekend sporting calendar to the less competitive nostalgia of the first Wednesday in June where it belongs. The Queen is said to be displeased with the move to Saturday. She is Not Amused. And neither are we.

By 2000, half the world will live in cities, the rest in societies dependent on them. MARTIN WOOLLACOTT looks for a way out of the concrete jungle. Illustration by Peter Till



Have we lost the cities of the heart?

WE endlessly complain about them, idealise them, deplore them, reject them, and embrace them. We hymn them, quantify them, and arrange them in league tables.

Cities more and more define our lives, become more and more of us in them. Perhaps definition is not the right word. Cities now loom so large that they amorphaously contain everything. City life is no longer one way of life, co-existing along with other ways, that of towns, or of the agricultural countryside, or even of nomads and pastoralists. All these survive, but increasingly tributary to the city.

The end of the long story of the City and the Country, so often predicted, may finally be with us. Perhaps it will come when, as delegates to the UN Habitat II conference in Istanbul have been told, the moment arrives at the turn of the century when more than half of its will live in cities. Three billion in cities; the other three billion in lesser settle-

ments whose economies and culture will be citified through and through; the mind boggles.

Such numbers breach continuity with the past. Aristotle said that the perfect city should have no more than 5,000 people, and that anything over 100,000 people, whatever it was, was not a city. Medieval cities were tiny, both in population numbers and in physical extent. London, one of the first big cities, was half a million in the 17th century, and vastly exceeded the next largest, Bristol, which had 30,000 inhabitants.

The ancient idea of a city as a community large enough for diversity, but small enough for face-to-face politics, that is, of the city as the optimum political unit, contrasts with the reality today of huge cities whose crying need is for good governance. This is so even if the mega-cities that were forecast and feared 10 years ago are not, according to the Habitat research, growing as rapidly as expected.

If cities have long since ceased to be places of optimum politics, they nevertheless in-

creasingly provide, more than nation or class, the framework within which we experience politics, and much of the language we use to talk about politics. The heaving of battered Sarajevo, the renaissance of Berlin, Velitsin's defiance of the coup-makers in Moscow: the city is the stage for these tales of the triumph of good over evil.

The quality of life in the city, too, is properly used as a political measure. The South African writer Rian Malan described in a recent article the degeneration of Yeoville, the once-pleasantly Bohemian corner of Johannesburg in which he lives, toward squalor. After another burst of nighttime shooting, he writes: "No, I didn't call the police. It was just another of those South African things." Malan's concerns about South Africa's difficulties were more effectively invoked by his brief plea for Yeoville than by analysis.

Jeremy Seabrook's moving new book, *In the Cities of the South*, is in the tradition of Henry Mayhew. It attempts to rescue, as Mayhew did in 19th-

Fergie cashes in the Palace



Mary Riddell

It may only be a matter of time and money. So why the fuss? Because it will lower the tone of the royal family? But what, these days, does not? In terms of taste, this is a picture of Fergie with an AIDS baby were far less disturbing than the spectacle of Diana dancing with what appeared to be a Charolais in a dinner suit but was actually a 23-stone American playboy. If the Palace does not like the duchess's plans, then it must look to its own lack of vision.

Those courtiers who were pompously fond of warning that "the knives were out for Fergie" should have recognised the wisdom of reaching a sensible accommodation with a woman made dangerous not by malice but by naivety and a rapacious need for easy cash. They are also in part responsible for the chaos of the party in which her decision to publish seems reasonable. It is, after all, slightly ironic that while the Prince and Princess of Wales may tell all, their former housekeeper, Wendy Berry, has been gagged through the British courts and is now in exile in America because of her anonymous below-stairs book.

One rule for the servants, then, and another for what Harold Robbins (a fellow client of Fergie's prestigious New York editor) might term the carpetbaggers. Or, in the duchess's case, the carpet-sweeper. For, unlike the Waleses, the duchess — who has many enemies but no agents other than a large cheque — is likely to ensure that the dirt remains under the Axminster.

□ I have just returned from the People's Republic of Laos, where our national trade delegation (one man on loan from the Bangkok Embassy) has not prevented the country from pandering to every whim of the discerning British traveller.

A new hotel has opened, boasting a lavish English brochure. "Various styles exotic suites offer you serene place to quickly renews your vitality." It says, failing to mention that these are located just above the nightclub ("large dance floor let you relax, bottoms up, dance to the music, twist away one night's slight drunkenness"). The drunkenness was indeed minimal, since the cellar contained only one bottle of Niersteiner and one of Riesling, but the banquet was worthy of a visiting Kohli or Chirac. "We have brought in vast beef especially for you English," said our hosts. "But you must not worry. We import it from New Zealand."

Smallweed



SUMMERTIME, and the think-tanks are a-thoughting. The rising cerebral sap is evidenced in the busting out all over of ideas, proposals, papers and whatnot. There's Nexus

"the biggest ideas network in British history", all set to fill New Labour's head with brave, original thinking (well, thinking anyway). There are the old lags, showing these rookies how it's done: Demos (a paper calling for a new kind of entrepreneurship based on niceness to workers, i.e. not entrepreneurship); the Social Affairs Unit (a book demanding a return to good manners) and the Institute for Public Policy Research (a report due Monday on reform of EU citizenship). Confronted with all this bright-eyed, what-we-must-do stuff, Smallweed cannot resist replaying The Poetry Society (BBC Radio; December 1999), during which Tony Hancock enthuses to Sid James about his anti-establishment beatnik group, the East Cheam Cultural Progressive Society. Sid is unimpressed: "When you add it all up, it's a bit tatty, isn't it?" Hancock explodes. "Tatty? We're the hope of the world, mate!"

MEANWHILE, Smallweed has spent the last few days thinking long and hard about bricks and mortar, as is only natural during National Housing Week, and has contemplated affairs of the liver, only right and proper during Hepatitis Awareness Week. This squeezed the time available for meditating on creek-related matters as befitted Arthritis Research Week or for basking in Sun Awareness Week. Nor was there a lot of brainpower left for UN World Environment Day (Wednesday), although today we should all be sufficiently recovered to sound the alarm for Tampoon Alert Day and to wallow in World Oceans Day. No pause for

breath, though; today marks also the beginning of Friends of the Earth's Car Week, of Down's Syndrome Awareness Week and of National Wildlife Week. And no peace on the Sabbath either: tomorrow we begin National Swimfit Week and National Walk to School Week. Had enough? Then emigrate before Monday, the kick-off for National Food Safety Week.

WANTED: a captain for one of the unhappliest ships in Whitehall, the Central Office of Information. The Government's propaganda outfit has lost half its workforce in 10 years, and we hear the new chief executive will be expected to eliminate 100 of the surviving 480 posts. Smallweed's runners and riders for the £75,000 slot follow, starting with civil-service insiders: Mike

Granatt (Home Office information director), Andrew Marre (deputy press chief at No 10), Jim Coe (head of info, at education 'n' employment) and dark-horse Keith Williamson, COI finance chief. Gossip rules, but more cuts a priority at COI, his financial background makes him worth a side bet. The women's interest is represented by Jean Caines, DTT information supremo, and her opposite numbers at Health (Romola Christopherson) and the MOD (Gill Samuel). Outsiders include Adrian Moorey (now Cable & Wireless spokesman, previously head of info, at DTT and the Home Office) and Hugh Colver, the chap who tried out the Conservative Central Office communications job in 1995 and swiftly decided he didn't have what it took. Given that Colver had been head of

PR at the MOD during the Gulf War, the heat in the Mawhinney kitchen must have been at Gobi desert levels. But the outsiders of outside betters have to be on two former COI men: Chris Tarrant, the wireless presenter and leave-it-to-Maryna, the film director.

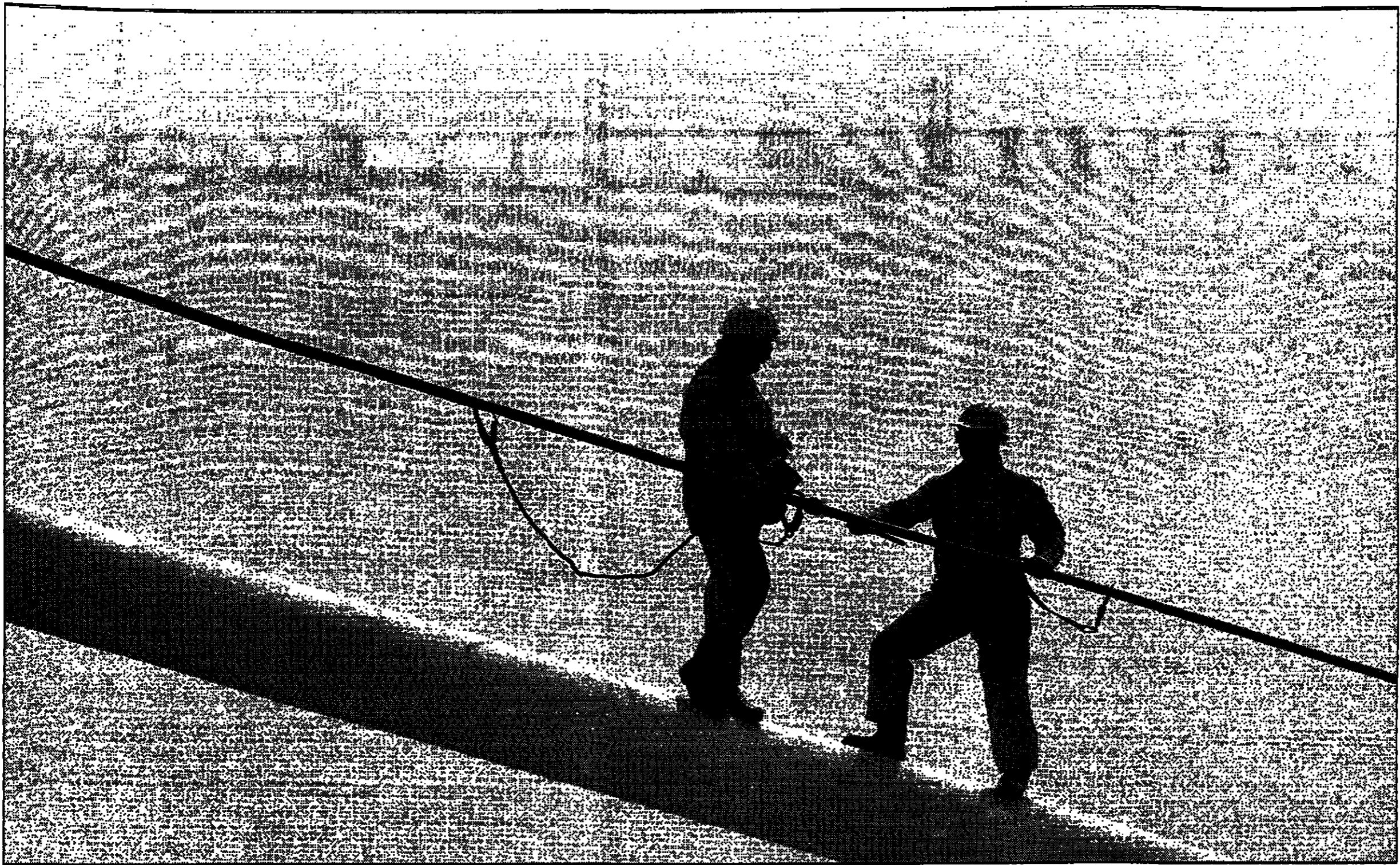
THE reported worldwide electronic renaissance of the haiku — the Japanese 17-syllable still-life mini-poem — encourages marginally warmer feelings towards the Internet, although the British made their definitive contribution to the art form 32 years ago. "Venus only live twice/Once when you are born/And once when you look death in the face" (Ian Fleming; 1964). Very good Bondo-san, but, as Tiger Tanaka points out, it has the incorrect number of syllables. Rotten English

too: the "only" is in the wrong place. Still, it beats haiku about Spain, the most popular topic at present.

OUR fears last month that Jude last month the best of Hardy to Hollywood and leave nothing for our own, super-sensitive adaptations were groundless. Let The Trumpet Major go to MGM, just leave us with The Distracted Preacher (1879), a long-ish short story with a PS from TH suggesting his female lead, a dashing lady smuggler, does not, as the story claims, repent and settle down with the preacher of the title; "much to her credit, in the author's opinion", she flees to Wisconsin with another smuggler. If that isn't ambiguous and alternative enough for our cine types, nothing will be.

HARDLY were last week's final three words ("Stone's Best Bitter") heading to the press than we knew we would regret them. Intensive market research using the latest American techniques (thanks for the letter, Mr Yorke) confirms our readers take their ale seriously and prefer only the most authentic of real beers. Name one brand and eight rivals stizzle down the wire from Mr Yorke's computer port; they range from Mackeson's Milk Stout to the terrifying-seeming Old Accidental. One day, Smallweed will come out, loud and proud, brandishing a pint of E (it's a drink, you fool!) and declare himself a man who likes proper chemicals in his sticco, rather than privet leaves and doormouse bones. One day... but not yet.

Smallweed



A job with a view... painters Dave Whatmore and Jed Needs at work on the bridge. In the background the Second Severn Crossing which opened this week

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF MORGAN

A very odd job at 450 feet

As the second Severn bridge opens, high above the river, a group of men toil on the old one. GARY YOUNGE rose to the occasion

STANDING 450 feet over the River Severn, in a hard hat and a luminous orange jumpsuit, Jed Needs is trying hard to convince me that his job is just like anybody else's. "I admit that to a layman it does look a bit dangerous, but I don't honestly think of any other job I'd rather be doing," he says. I am unconvinced. Jed has been working on the bridge as a painter and rigger for seven years. I have been on it for less than seven minutes and just a peek through the tiny holes on the platform on to the traffic several hundred feet below makes me queasy. The only time most of us get anywhere near this kind of height we are accompanied by a bag full of duty free and an inflight magazine. Jed does it every day.

If you look up high and hard as you cross the bridge on a clear summer afternoon you will see three little dots milling about in the haze. From that distance they could be anything. They are in fact Jed, and his two workmates, Dave Whatmore and Martin Barrett. Three of the 40 or so men who work on the Severn Bridge. When the new Severn Bridge, formally called the Second Severn Crossing, was opened this week, the focus of media attention was on Prince Charles and the spat over toll fees. Little thought was given, inevitably perhaps, to the men and women who keep the structure alive, heaving beams and the elements, day in day out. To most people the bridge is simply what they must cross to get from England to Wales. But to Jed, Dave, Martin and their

colleagues on the original Severn Bridge — 18,500 tons of steel spanning 975 metres and covered in 55,000 gallons of paint — this is their life. Jed, aged 35, says it is his ideal job since he used to be a mountain climber; Martin is a former postman and Dave, aged 32, was unemployed before he took to the bridge. There was no mystery how they fell into the job — they saw an advert in the paper and applied, just like any other. Would-be riggers and painters aren't questioned about the obvious occupational hazard — vertigo — unless it is thought they are the type for whom it might be a problem. "We just take them out and strap them on to a cable and see how they do. Everybody's bound to be wary of the height at first. But nobody's ever been refused the

job because of that," says Hugh Thomas, the bridge engineer. Once new recruits have been taken on they are usually quickly hooked. "There is a huge attachment to the bridge. It is a beautiful structure and once you've started here people rarely want to leave. I can't imagine myself working anywhere else until I retire." Martin will certainly not work anywhere else until he retires. He is 63 and has worked on the bridge for almost 24 years. He is full of tales of the bad old days when safety took second place to productivity and equipment would regularly break down. "Sometimes if the lifts broke, we'd have to climb to the top of the tower on a ladder. We could be out here when it was blowing a gale, and the bridge would be swinging all over the place. You could just hold the brush and the rods would swing round by themselves," he said. When he started he earned £28 a week. Now he earns 10 times that. None the less he is looking forward to his retirement as the work, though safer, is not as enjoyable as it used to be. "The cratic is dying out. I think we used to have much more of a laugh," he says. Workers are not allowed on the bridge if the wind is blowing at more than 40 knots or if there is frost. Fatal accidents do happen, though. Five years ago two painters died when their gantry fell from the bottom of the bridge into the rocky river below. Two years ago a winch fell 200 feet and hit a man on the head, killing him instantly. But these, the men insist, are one-offs. "It's much safer than driving on the motorway. So long as people follow the safety procedures then they should be fine. It's not a job for daredevils," says Hugh, who claims his knees still go weak if he has to go on top of his own roof. For someone who just scraped through O-Level physics he has made a hell of a job of it. The instructions for a self-assembly bookcase the fact that bridges exist at all is little less than a marvel to me. The fact that I, a fully paid up member of

the vertigo club, am standing on top and enjoying the view — which on a good day can stretch from the tip of the Malvern hills to Exmoor — is little short of a miracle. The feeling is heightened when the Guardian's photographer asks Dave to pose and in response Dave starts to do a little jig and waves his brush about, dancing on a cable a foot wide and 400 feet above the sea. The bridge builders pick up their overalls and tools at eight and knock off at 4.30pm, like many other regular jobs. In between they might be painting, greasing and assisting with inspections or welding. Of course, there are certain irregularities. They take no lunch up there and there are no loos. If they are caught short they might use a paint pot but generally their bladders keep time with the general routine. They are basically odd-job men in a very odd job. Their work station provides a supreme vantage point from which they can survey the patchwork splendour of both

South Wales and south west England, woven together by hedgerows and decorated by spires. They can also chart the high and low tides of the Severn and point out the service station where the Manic Street Preacher musician, Richey Edwards, was last seen. The workers tell stories of horrific road accidents like the man who left his young wife in the car when he broke down and turned around to see her and the car flattened by a lorry. Or the caravan that flew away from the car which was towing it and ended up on the other side of the road looking like someone had split matches everywhere. "We saw a bloke throw a package into the sea," says Hugh. "We didn't know what it was but it looked pretty suspicious so we called the police. It ended up being his dead baby daughter." But their most chilling story, related by Dave, is how they watched helplessly as a man who, high on cannabis and alcohol, climbed over the

safety barriers and all the way up the cables to the top, where he planned to kill himself. "He was serious. I mean he'd thrown his glasses and his wallet into the Severn and was just about to go when the policeman said: 'Hang on mate, do you want a flag,' and managed to talk him down." On our way down I am trying not to show my relief at the prospect of an imminent reunion with *terra firma*, as the lift door closes on us, all tightly packed. Then Dave remembers another anecdote. "Come to think of it, we did have a bloke freak out in this lift once. Went nuts he did, and we were all crummed in just like we are going home. We worried that he would rock it so much it would stop and we would get jammed." Charming. Not before time, the lift chinks to a halt. The grid door opens and we pile out. I feel like a mince emerging from his first excursion into the pit. Though I, gratefully, came down to earth and not up to it.

Round up the ritual failures



Martin Kettle

THE 30 months of what is still formally dignified as the Northern Ireland peace process have been punctuated with what Sir Patrick Mayhew colourfully calls "shit or bust days". At such moments, ministers, politicians and civil servants have heaved long painful hours to ease the next stage of the journey. This week in London there was a classic of the species — sweaty hours in the June heat to bring forth the detailed procedural arrangements for the talks which are due to start in Belfast on Monday. And in the end, which of Mayhew's options have London and Dublin produced this time? The answer is a bit of both. The end product of the week's Anglo-Irish efforts is, as usual, an intricately balanced package fully comprehensible only to initiates. Yet if this was June 1996 rather than June 1995, it would almost certainly be the kind of skillfully crafted professional compromise which would have sealed one of the genuinely great goals of the whole process: the moment when Sinn Fein sat down with the Ulster Unionists to discuss the future of Northern Ireland. But this is June 1996 and nothing is certain at all.

Unless the IRA has a last-minute change of mind, Monday will be another day of traditional and recognisable Northern Ireland ritual. Everyone will play the pantomime part to which he or she is long accustomed: Mayhew regretful, Dick Spring impatient, David Trimble teetotal, John Hume sanctimonious, Ian Paisley bombastic and Gerry Adams desecrating. Instead of being the threshold of the new Northern Ireland, it will be another trip down the echoing corridors of the old. No matter how hard most of them try to pretend the peace process is still alive, without a resumed IRA ceasefire, Monday seems set to prove it is bust. It is very easy to say that this was a foreseeable outcome all those months ago, when John Major and Albert Reynolds stood by a Christmas tree in Downing Street and wished that Santa would bring us peace in Northern Ireland. Many good judges believed it would end this way, because in the end there was not enough in it for Sinn Fein to risk the historic compromise which was all that could democratically be offered. Yet many equally good judges thought that this pessimistic determinism was misplaced, and that there genuinely was an opportunity which had not previously existed. Before it becomes the new accepted wisdom that the peace process was a brave but naive venture whose collapse was essentially inevitable, it needs to be asserted in the strongest and clearest possible terms that this was not so. Four broad and underlying

factors in the Northern Ireland situation began to change significantly in the 1990s and still exist today. They were: first, the acceptance by a Conservative government that it might be possible to reach a new all-party Anglo-Irish agreement in return for an end to the IRA's war; second, the IRA's genuine interest in what it calls the totally unarmed strategy towards republican goals; third, signs of political modernisation and pluralism in the Irish Republic; and, fourth, the continuing division and even fragmentation of unionism. None of these subtle changes is individually the cause of the opportunity for peace which opened up in 1995 and which is now disappearing before our eyes. The chemistry of the four together made this moment possible, against the background of a continuing, but sporadically expressed popular will for peace. These changes did not in any sense make a settlement inevitable. Yet the Downing Street Declaration undoubtedly opened up the possibility. It was the political precondition without which the IRA could not allow the process to reach its next goal. That goal was the IRA ceasefire which eventually arrived in August 1994. The political importance of this ceasefire was enormous. It meant Sinn Fein could be brought into political dialogue and, subsequently, into a structured all-party talks process. To do that, however, meant persuading sufficient unionist opinion to take part too. The challenge was like one of those hand-held games where you have to gently tip each marble

into a hole without tipping the others out. There are those who say Major was wrong to do it that way, and that he should have concentrated all his attention on deal-making with Sinn Fein and pressed ahead more quickly, as Albert Reynolds among others wanted. That was and is unrealistic unless you believe — as some do — that British policy should be to withdraw from Northern Ireland irrespective of the wishes of the people who live there. Like most people in this country, though, Major had a

How Gazza saved civilisation

In a 'me, me' world, SIMON HOGGART cheers the England team's collectivity

THE news that the England football team had been declared collectively guilty of smashing up an airline cabin sent some of us back a long way. "Unless the boy who is responsible for this comes forward, the whole form will miss Sports Day," I heard again, through the mists of time. I don't suppose it happens much now. The notion of collective guilt is one we have been losing for years. Mrs Thatcher didn't believe in "society", and if we don't share the idea of a collective existence, then it's hardly likely that we're going to take any blame for anything which someone else does. I thought the football team came out of it rather well. I don't know what happened in the Cathay Pacific bubble, but it's unlikely that one or two members of the team stowed in the TVs while the others sat with their books, nursing a small Bailey's. Most men remember a time when they and their mates went mental coming back from a game. A communal insanity takes over, and it was often the shyest and most insecure who did the damage, just to show they could be as rough as the rest. The obsession with finding whose fist did the damage is, in its way, unjust; they may well have been all to blame. "We are all guilty" was the slogan of Peter Simple's joke psychiatrist, Dr Heinz



in jail, yet crime remains appallingly high. The loss of our collective consciousness is clear in politics. Cabinet ministers, once sworn to uphold each other, now take every chance to let it be known how they disagreed with that failed position. It's decades since anyone resigned because their staff made a mistake. Lord Carrington, in 1982, was the last Cabinet minister to quit because he himself did. Nobody does that now (except where sex is concerned). Few politicians feel they owe anything to their colleagues, only to the preservation of their individual career. Maybe the new team spirit engendered on the plane will help England win the competition. I doubt it. In Britain we are no longer good at collective sports, as our cricket and soccer teams remind us so often. Instead our individuals excel (at least in sports which can continue if it rains); our heroes are Nick Faldo in golf, Damon Hill in motor racing, Linford Christie on the track. In the US, baseball clubs are not really teams, but collections of individuals striving to improve their personal statistics, which can be separated from the side's performance and used to measure the next pay rise. But that's where we're going here now. Short-term contracts and all the trappings of the new business order tell us that nobody has a duty to us, and that we have no duty to them. Firms don't offer loyalty to employees, and they don't get it back. ET was wrong — these days, we are alone. So good luck to the guilty soccer stars. At least there are some shreds of collective support left somewhere, even if it's only in a drunken melee on a jumbo,

Without the IRA ceasefire, the Northern Ireland peace process is nothing of the sort

more modest objective — to achieve peace on the basis of a new constitutional settlement democratically acceptable to the citizens of Northern Ireland. With that as the goal, the fundamental art was to get Sinn Fein (without whom peace is not possible) and sufficient unionists (without whom democratic endorsement is not possible) round the table to discuss the terms of a new settlement. That is why Trimble, as the leader of the only large block of unionists plausibly willing to take part on these terms, is as important in his own way as Adams is in his. Nevertheless, Major did get it wrong. Although under-

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The hit parade

SO CHILDREN can sometimes be horrible beyond the reach of reason or kindness (Leader, June 6) and that makes hitting them understandable? We didn't need those column inches trying to understand road rage, then — it's OK because all those other drivers are just so horrid! Come on, what a waste of a leader.

Parents don't need to be told that when they hit their children they (and Mr Blair) are just being human (did we ever doubt it?), they need more positive help than that. Parenting is a demanding activity and what is most demanding is not doing what is right but deciding what is right. Your leader, do the "it's all right because we've all done it" solution, takes us nowhere, particularly when you admit that smacking "rarely solves anything".

Parents need the support of the law to break the circle, to encourage the belief that hitting is not an option. As with rape within marriage, outlawing the hitting of children will be hard to police, but it is the very act of legislation, the public statement of what is considered right, which is of prime importance.

In the meantime, what should parents do when the children are being just too horrible? Go pummel a cushion, go stand in the next room and scream yourself, you'll get their attention — wide-eyed and disbelieving — and they'll know you're human too. And a dialogue just might begin. Alexandra Shepherd, 509 King Street, Aberdeen AB24 3BT.

on a clothed bottom? Several smacks with the hand on a bare bottom? Six of the best with a slipper? A cane? How about a bit of hard shaking? And at what age is it okay to start? As far as I can see, the only clear dividing line is between hitting and not hitting.

BEFORE I raised a hand to hit a child I used to reflect that I was three times larger than they — the equivalent for me of facing an enraged 18-foot ape — and remembered Isaac Asimov's dictum, "violence is the last resort of the incompetent". I hope our Prime Minister-in-waiting no longer cleaves to violent solutions. Oh, and my two daughters grew to be fine, unassaulted, adult citizens.

FOR GOODNESS' sake let's have some sense talked about this smacking issue! My good-natured, loving 20-year-old son was an obdurate little boy with whom every day was one long battle, until he was about five. Smacking him was an effective way of teaching him who was boss. I don't feel guilty about it and I couldn't have managed without it.

In contrast, my other two children, now 18 and 16, were smacked very seldom: one was reserved and shy, the other lively and demanding but seldom naughty. Smacking is right for some children and some parents. If you don't want to do it don't. But don't confuse the sort of smacking that I have used with abuse or cruelty. There is a dividing line.

IN DEFENCE of smacking children (The smack of firm government, June 6), Tony Blair and others say there is a clear dividing line between violence and administering discipline. Oh really? For the benefit of those of us with a less developed objective sense for these things, perhaps advocates of smacking could explain exactly where this clear dividing line lies. A light slap on the wrist? A firmer whack



Sara Thornton on trial again

IT SEEMS to be politically correct these days for almost every London-based newspaper to keep a resident female reporter on a golden chain, primed with instant aggression. Judging by her recent remarks in Sara Thornton's personality, yours is Catherine Bennett (Love and death in an impure world, June 5). The Guardian's days as an intelligent, humane paper seem long past.

Sara and I are pictured grinning in a tree and posing in a park — like hooligans. I suppose — figures of fun. Nice people smile, the rest of us grin. For the record, I was standing on the ground. Posing in a park, it is to be presumed, is less worthy than posing in print.

Hungry for blood, rottweilers have no time for love, tossing it aside as "mole-kissing terms". As for the dry rot which masquerades as justice in Britain today, un-sound-bite journalism has no time to examine corrupt law which permits judges to distort what Parliament has laid down in statute. The law on provocation is simple and sensible, until judges get to work daubing it with their own ancient prejudices. A dog's breakfast, one might risk calling it. Good journalists used to monitor and expose such perversion of law. Now they aid and abet it. Referring to Sara as "the Jeanne d'Arc of provocation"

away to penny? How can it ever be right to reward murder? The Independent needs to examine its stance. Is it suggesting that alcoholics are sub-human and therefore killing them is morally acceptable? If so, it should state it clearly. Mollie Lord, Jenner Road, Guildford, Surrey GU1.

SARA Thornton was damned for staying with Malcolm Thornton, and would have been damned if she had left him to it, possibly not least by herself. In that she is representative of many other women, who are on one level blamed for not leaving violent men, and on a deeper level tacitly expected to report and mother them through all the "rough patches".

If the so-called attention-seeking Ms Thornton wishes to romp about with the media, well, one can either avert one's gaze, or choose to see it as a change from the usual media format of an interview in a darkened room where the "battered woman" is asked in hushed tones: "How often did he beat you? Any permanent injuries?" This method has cloaked many a tough survivor with the more acceptable aura of victimhood. Una Freeseley, Women and Medical Practice, 40 Turpin Lane, London N8 0PS.

Little natural justice for the shattered fans at Hillsborough

YOUR report on the harrowing experiences of the former South Yorkshire police officer, David Frost, during and after the Hillsborough disaster provides a moving testimony (This is not blood money, June 4). It demonstrates the force's culpability, along with other agencies, in the worst tragedy at any British sports event. Your front-page coverage shows exactly why the compensation issue has become more than a material recognition of the long-term pain and suffering caused by the negligence of corporate bodies.

There are hundreds of accounts like Frost's of supporters enjoying an afternoon at a football match in the "care" of the FA, the club and the police. Unlike Frost and his colleagues, those on the terraces did not approach and respond to tragedy; they were caught in it. People died beneath and around them as they struggled to live and to save others. They screamed for the assistance of Frost's colleagues as their loved ones died in their arms. And the officers failed to respond.

In the gymnasium, where the bodies of the dead and injured were laid out, the fans were marginalised and excluded. Later that evening many identified their friends and loved ones. They had to look through numbered photographs of faces in body bags. Statements were then taken in an atmosphere more akin to interrogation than identification.

Many walked away from Hillsborough to shattered lives, never to work again. Others' lives have been cut short. Those ordinary people who stood on the terraces, whose sufferings began well before David Frost and his colleagues came on the scene, and whose dreadful experiences continued long into the night, have not been compensated for their trauma.

The complex and diverse procedures through which compensation claims are settled creates and sustains a hierarchy of suffering. While a price cannot be put on a life

or on debilitation, equanimity in the process and consistency in the awards must be guiding principles of natural justice. This shabby episode is just another example of the appalling injustices inflicted on the bereaved and survivors. (Prof) Phil Seraton, The Hillsborough Project, Centre for Studies in Crime and Social Justice, Edge Hill University College, St Helen's Road, Ormskirk, Lancs L39 4QP.

IMUST respond to your correspondents' letters (June 7) regarding the compensation payments to police officers following Hillsborough. When will it be realised that psychological injuries suffered by persons exposed to traumatic incidents, in their most extreme forms, can be just as debilitating as physical injuries? If these compensation awards had been made for the loss of a limb, for instance, I suspect there would have been no "outrage" from your correspondents.

While all members of the emergency services and armed forces recognise and accept the conditions of their employment, and therefore the dangers to which they may be exposed, no individual is immune from the effects of psychological trauma. These awards are surely a step in the right direction. Tony Welch, Wain Farmhouse, Nercwys, Flintshire CH7 4EW.

Marriages of great convenience

JONATHAN Freedland (The pink, white and blue, June 4) highlights the American conflict between those who want gay marriages and those who define marriage solely in terms of the legal union between one man and one woman. There is an equally powerful conflict within the gay community here and in the US between those who seek married status and those who prefer the concept of a civil domestic partnership with the same rights and responsibilities — as a civil marriage and open to all couples, straight and gay.

I accept that within the gay community there are some who want to see gay marriages recognised for deeply held religious reasons. I

Crowded cells

THE revelation by the Director General of the Prison Service that the prison population is set to reach 60,000 by next autumn (Prisoners chief seeks £115m for new jails, June 4) is a stark reminder of the power of political rhetoric in the area of law and order.

The previous projections indicated that the number of prisoners would not reach 58,500 until 2004. The proliferation of prison sentences encouraged by the Home Secretary's "Prison Works" policy is placing the Prison Service in an increasingly impossible position. Even if it is quickly granted extra money, the number of prisoners in custody would still rise by 3,000 over the next year.

The slogan "Prison works" is a grotesque misnomer for current policies. Overcrowded and overstretched prisons are a constant source of prisoners' alarming behaviour contains a lesson for all politicians: if they favour a balanced penal policy which makes a sparing use of prison, they must argue publicly for it. It will not be achieved by stealth behind a smokescreen of tough talk which itself affects the climate in which courts sentence. Paul Casadino, Chairman, Penal Affairs Consortium, 168 Clapham Road, London SW9 0PU.

Cutting that Redwood down to size

IT IS inaccurate and disingenuous for John Redwood (Jobs for the people, Comment page, June 5) to blame the social chapter and the single currency for high levels of unemployment in Europe. Inaccurate, because there is no legislation so far passed under the social chapter provision which could be blamed for unemployment — unless Redwood thinks works councils put people out of work. In fact, the social chapter expressly excludes wages from its remit.

If he is confusing the social chapter with the minimum wage, why does he make no effort to show that minimum wages are the culprit for unemployment in Europe. Inaccurate, because the minimum wage is still rising by 3,000 over the next year.

Letters to the Editor may be faxed on 0171 837 4530 or sent by post to 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER, and by e-mail to letters@guardian.co.uk. Please include a full postal address and daytime telephone number, even in e-mailed letters. We regret we cannot acknowledge receipt of letters. We may edit them: shorter ones are more likely to appear.

A Country Diary

NORTH PEMBROKESHIRE: Pembrokekeshire echoes to the remains of a lost culture. Those early people built graves, erected standing stones and constructed protected living areas — forts, raths, castles. Sometimes during inclement weather I wonder what their lives were like. We visited one rath in a quiet piece of old oak woodland. Small oak trees, stunted by stony earth and westerly winds, have sundered the wall. Some grow in the ditch. We chose to approach it from below. Like most forts, part of its defence is based on a steep cliff. A track broad enough for a horse ascends at an oblique angle to emerge at the fort entrance between two rocky outcrops, one split by an oak which has been growing, falling, starting again for centuries. You step into a small circular enclosure no more than 30 paces across. As it hasn't been excavated your imagination can be vividly employed on the life of the small community that lived there. Now it's young oaks, bluebells and bracken. We

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After a week in the firing line, JACK STRAW refuses to back down over imposing curfews on young children I have a dream – and I don't want it mugged

NEXT week sees the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Commission for Racial Equality. Labour's three race relations acts, each successively tougher, have worked to secure a profound change in the culture of race relations in our society.

block Labour's Race Relations Bills, they did so on the grounds that they were illiberal measures which would restrict individuals' freedom of speech. The power of the state, they said, should not be used to interfere with people's "liberty" to decide for themselves who they liked or disliked, whom they would serve in a pub, or to whom they would give a job.



It will not do for Straw [left] to defend curfews by saying that he is a liberal. He can keep his big stick, but he needs to tread more softly. *New Statesman*

Constable Jack Straw has got his truncheon out again. The only people who can or should tell teenagers when to come home are their parents. *Daily Express*

New Labour loves flexing its muscles. It is tough on infants playing on the street after dusk. The only thing it is not tough on is the economy. *Larry Elliott, The Guardian*

I have great reservations that one can enforce responsibility on parents. *Tony Butler, Chief Constable of Gloucestershire*

family support and training, do so with a set of social norms to guide them.

But at present there is very little parental counselling and education. Measures are sometimes taken too late, and without effective community support — which is where the curfew proposal comes in.

Under this proposal, a council with the agreement of the police could declare a curfew in respect of children 10 and under in a particular area.

They would only do so with the backing of local residents, in all probability at their request. The process would be a collaborative one, in which the community — especially the parents — was involved in collective discussion about the behaviour they wished to see and about other measures needed to strengthen family support.

The debate that would ensue would, I believe, lead to far greater agreement among parents, teachers and police

about young people's behaviour. But if after all this process of community discussion, agreement and help, some parents still let young children out on the streets late at night, is it not reasonable for society to step in?

Such intervention is surely better than allowing these children to decline into delinquency through neglect and disinterest. As for whether such a scheme would work, let it be piloted. The risk is small, the potential benefit very great.

I have always thought adults should be able to live their lives as they think best. But bringing up a child cannot be a wholly private act. Such an approach is no more "authoritarian" than that of our race relations legislation. Giving children the chance to grow up in a secure and orderly way, in which adults take responsibility for them, is one of the greatest freedoms we can secure for the young and for our future.

few people. The Times commented in 1971 how much law and order had "slipped back as a Conservative priority". When I became MP for Blackburn in 1979, I rarely received any complaints about crime and disorder. Today, I have harrowing stories from my constituents about how their lives have been wrecked by disorderly neighbours and their children, who appear to have little or no conception of their responsibilities to others.

Of course, many of the social and economic forces which have helped create dys-

functional, disorderly communities are entirely external to those trapped in these communities, whether victim or perpetrator of that disorder. Of these forces, the collapse of dignified work for under-skilled young men has been the most potent — which is why one of Labour's first priorities will be to provide work or training for all unemployed young people and action to tackle the scourge of long-term unemployment.

And, as the product of a single-parent family, I have nothing but contempt for those who suggest single

mothers or fathers are to "blame". But analysis must lead not to paralysis, but to action. To take the specific issues which I raised last weekend — there is a growing problem of children, out on the streets, late at night. It is first and foremost, an issue of child protection. But the behaviour of these children can contribute to crime in an area.

Hand-wringing, wishing the world were different is no answer. What we do know is that a failure in the relationship between parent and child is one of the key factors which

can lead young people into crime.

Is it "authoritarian" to intervene early and effectively to prevent that happening? Hardy. Successive, all-party children's legislation places clear responsibility for the upbringing of children on parents.

Where parents fail to meet their parental responsibilities the state can, and does, intervene and can even take the ultimate step of removing a child altogether from its parents. And social services departments, and voluntary agencies where they provide

Lisa Clayton made her name sailing alone around the world and has now written a book about it. She would like to talk about her experiences if only her business partner, Peter Harding, would let her get a word in edgeways



'I grew to like myself better', says Clayton
PHOTOGRAPHY GARRY WEASER

Voyage round my minder

The Joanna Coles Interview

Cast: Lisa Clayton: Small, pretty honey-blond, aged 37, single, who now spends her time giving "motivational talks" after sailing around the world unassisted in 285 days. Although the yachting establishment initially doubted her achievement, her world record was completely ratified last July. Her voice is surprisingly girlish.
Peter Harding: Handsome divorcee in mid-forties. Formerly a promotions expert with Birmingham Council. Organised sponsorship for Lisa's trip and now runs their joint promotions business, Clayton Harding Associates, whose office it is. During Lisa's voyage, they were in daily contact by fax, some of which are published in Lisa's new book about the voyage.
Joanna Coles: A journalist trying to interview Lisa about

the volume in question, *At The Mercy Of The Sea*.
Props: Two desks, small table, four office chairs, one model classic car. Harding remains behind desk. Clayton and Coles sit round table. The interview is proving difficult because Harding keeps interrupting.
Scene one: 1:45pm
Coles: You mentioned you do some work for Land Rover? Lisa: They have Discovery days at stately homes where they learn to drive off road. I'm there to welcome them, you know, "You don't know what you can do until you've tried..."
Harding: It's a taste of adventure for them isn't it?
Lisa: Yes, it's...
Harding: It's believing in the product, sorry to interrupt, but if we didn't believe in it then you wouldn't endorse it. You can't afford to, we have a nice rapport with Land Rover.
2pm
Lisa: We get 30 to 40 requests a week, sometimes I have two or three events a day.
Harding: We have we? Lisa: I had two days off at Christmas.
Christmas:
Harding: (Picking up office diary and reading random entry) Woman's lunch in Birmingham... Esther Rantzen show... Gainsborough Hotel for an annual women's dinner... bank manager...
Coles: (To Lisa) How much do you charge?

Harding: What you want to say to some people is "Would you come and work for me for free?" No, you wouldn't!
2:15pm
Coles: Did you predict such wide interest on your return? Lisa: I hadn't given it a thought. I didn't know how far I would get or if I would come back! I wanted to sleep for three weeks.
Harding: We only realised how big it was when you got back, that was when we realised wasn't it?
Lisa: I had some idea...
Harding: We had some idea... Lisa: Because Peter was inundated with letters. (One from Prince Charles inviting her to a garden party at Highgrove.)
Coles: Did you go?
Lisa: Mmm...
Harding: Yes it was fantastic.
Lisa: Yes I went...
Harding: We've been very lucky, the people that we've met. You look back on it and you think "Crikey! Got to savour the moment!" I wrote to Prince Charles to say I liked his speech about putting the great back into Britain. We're a great nation, but we're not selling ourselves.
2:30pm
Coles: (To Lisa) How did the voyage affect Peter's life? Lisa: It totally wrecked him. Harding: Totally wrecked it. Lisa: Peter's divorce happened when I was away. Peter's got a house with a girl, but that's not going too well

(gestures round office), probably because of all of this.
Harding: The trip took over my life. It took over. I couldn't fax her and say "Hi Lisa, it's a lovely day here in Birmingham. I'm popping off to Wales for the weekend." I couldn't. Lisa: I kept saying to Peter: "If I were you I'd go."
Harding: I kept thinking it's my baby, you've got it this far, I've got to coax it and do all I can.
Coles: The book reads like a love affair by fax.
Lisa: I wish I'd realised that...
Harding: Our relationship is like having a car that's running well. When you go in for a service you don't say, "Strip the engine." You say: "I just want the oil changed."
2:45pm
(Harding leaves to make "an awkward phone call")
Coles: What made you decide to sail the world?
Lisa: Reading Naomi James's book. I was never really content. I thought how wonderful to do something with your life like that. I'd never really tried before and it was the first time ever I had something I had to do. Nothing else mattered.
Coles: And were you satisfied afterwards?
Lisa: Yes, to an extent. I grew to like myself better. Before, I thought I've done okay in life, but underneath there was a fear that I might be a failure. I was lacking something...
Harding: (Cheerful as he re-enters and interrupts.) Everybody has an Everest don't they?

3pm:
Lisa: I never sit and think about the trip. I did have problems writing about the really bad storm (where she capsized seven times). I kept putting it off.
Harding: (Brightly.) The worst thing in life is to relive a bad experience. I was the one receiving the faxes and it was bad enough for me!
3:15pm
Lisa: (Explaining how Harding was her chief support.) I certainly wouldn't recommend to anyone else that there's just one person. Peter had this thing about the responsibility he felt. It would be much better if it was a team responsibility.
Harding: I'm one of those people that if I do something, I go with it. I helped to get her out there. What would Mr Jones down the road who put 50p in the pot think if she didn't come back?
Coles: (To Peter) Are you a control freak?
Lisa: Yes, yes he is!
Coles: Surely the whole point of sailing around the world is that you have no control. It's you against the elements, that's the point.
Lisa: But Peter couldn't see it like that. I'm not being funny Peter, but you are a control freak. Peter likes to be in control of everything!
3:30pm
Harding: I have a dream, a passion for Wales. I'd like a weekend retreat to get away from Birmingham.
Lisa: I'm not being funny, but that's another example. It's got to be Wales. If I wanted to go away for the weekend I'd think "Where can I go that's nice", but with you...
Harding: ... Hang on, hang on...
Lisa: No, it's got to be Wales.
Harding: ... Mountains either side, herons, Snowdon in the background. I would like to do something with Lisa though, an expedition or something.
Coles: But would you be any good on a boat, could you take orders?
Harding: I've helmed!

Lisa: (Shaking head) Um, I don't know. I don't know...
Harding: (Interrupting.) I've helmed her back from Plymouth!
Coles: Could you take a long trip together?
Lisa: No, no, he'd be fine for the first three weeks then Peter would know it all and he'd be saying "Why are you doing it like that? I'll do it". I'm not being funny...
Harding: I bring people in who are experts. I can do it myself, but if someone else can do it better, you bring them in. No matter how much I sail I'll never catch up with Lisa in the short term, but I might be a better sailor than Lisa...
3:45pm
Lisa: I'm not being funny, Peter would be fine while he was picking it up, but that would be it. Then he'd know it.
Harding: (Accusatory) You're the same!
Lisa: Yes I am, that's why I know...
Harding: We're both strong individualists. We both like to be in control. When I worked for the council, people would say "Why are you always first in the car park every morning Peter?" Because it suited me! (In motivational mood.) You talk to a team to 5pm person and you think "Don't just sit there, if you have something to say, put it in writing and move it forward! Move it forward!"
Lisa: I used to get in at 7am at Horizon (the travel company she worked for once). I don't sleep well these days. I go to bed about 10.30pm and I'm up at 2.30am.
Harding: I was up at 1am this morning.
4pm
Coles: (Exhausted) By the way, what happened to the cuddly toys (two teddies and a stuffed dog called Bernard) that you took on the trip?
Harding: Oh, they've got their own story to tell! Of what they saw — whales and sharks and the Duke of York. A nice little angle for a children's book, that.

TEST DRIVE YOUR BRAIN



- WALK () NEXT
- ZERO () CALF
- EVEN () ADDS
- KNIT () INTO
- CLAD () FLEE
- KERB () YELP
- GERM () ROAD

On each line place a letter in the space which, when substituted for the first letter of the word either side, will form another word in each case. The seven letters used will give another word reading downwards. What is it?

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Views from the melting pot

Radio

Anne Karpf

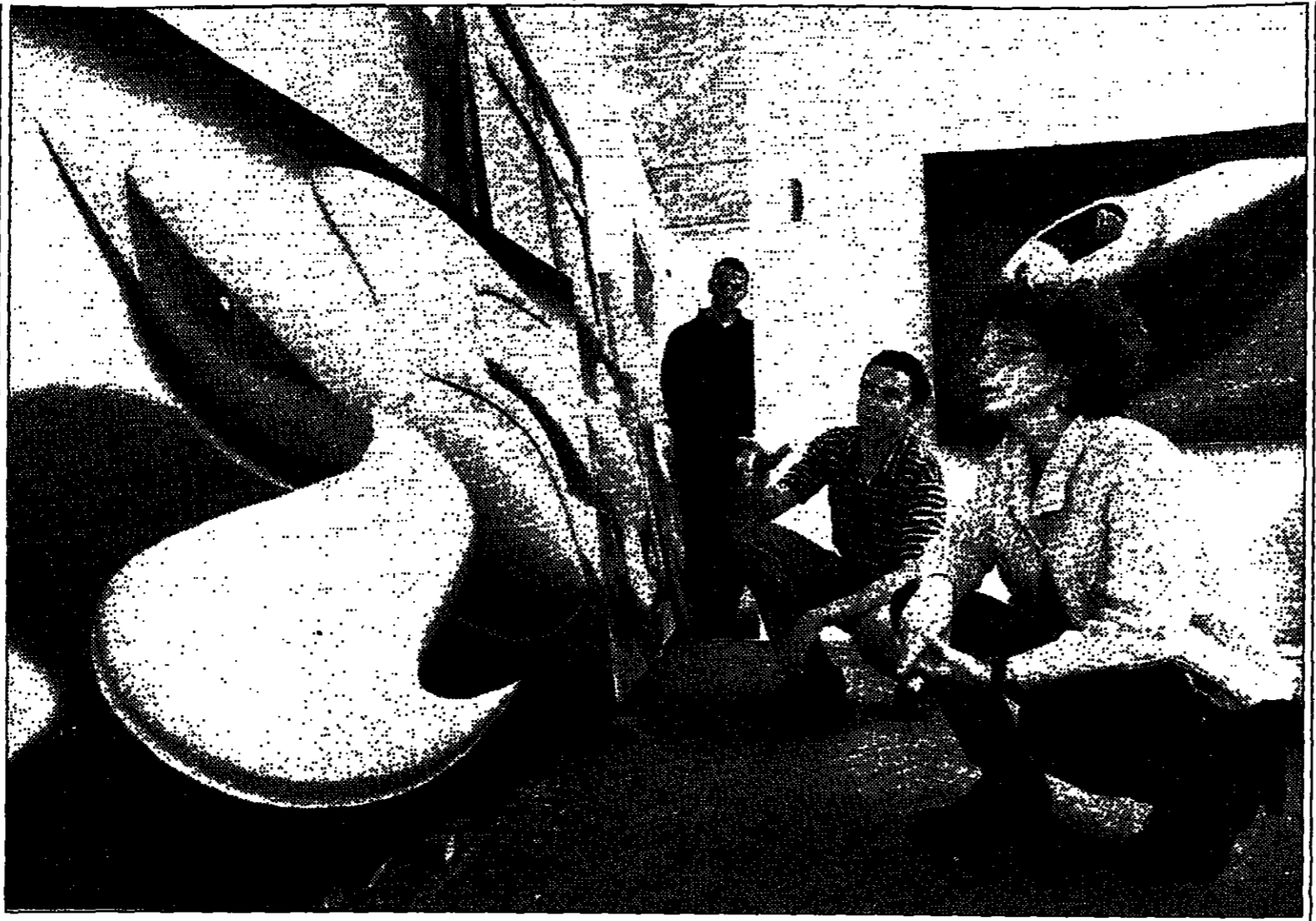
A N ASIAN stand-up comic, a female Chinese lawyer, and a racist Brummie — what do they have in common? They all appeared in last week's Radio 5 Live season, *Race Around The UK* (which ends tomorrow). With more than 40 programmes broadcast over nine days, the season has marked the network's coming of age.

I approached it with trepidation — there's little more deadeningly worthy than the term "multi-cultural". Would this be white reporters cooing over the exotica on our doorstep? Most of the programmes avoided this, many by having ethnic minority presenters, although the opening programme, *The Big Picture*, presented by Trevor McDonald, did have its lapses with reporter Wendy Robbins's breathless "Gosh, that's fantastic" approach to ethnic communities.

Would it be a depressing catalogue of debates? Certainly, and properly, this was part of the season: according to Silent Scream, the last Home Office statistics recorded 130,000 racist attacks a year, and we know that such attacks are vastly under-reported. The programme eschewed sloganeering for a more sophisticated analysis, examining the case both for a new offence of racial violence and against it, on the grounds that sufficient laws already exist, if only the Crown Prosecution Service made use of them.

The season reflected the enormous diversity of ethnic groups — as well as Afro-Caribbeans and Asians, we heard from Italians in Bedford and Chinese in Liverpool — and the differences between them. Two excellent programmes explored current heated debates within black communities: *Sisters Are Doing It For Themselves* looked at the "ambition gap" between young black women, many of whom are making it in the professions and managerial positions, and young black men, most of whom aren't. Yet this was no gloom magazine, reason to black bourgeoisification, but an unblinkered examination of the paths open to black men, some of whom argued that black women are advancing because white men feel less threatened by them. Similarly, *I'm Not An Uncle Tom* scrutinised accusations that Frank "know what I mean, Harry" Bruno is an Uncle Tom, playing the fool for white TV viewers. Footballer John Barnes suggested that we should abandon such terms because they rely just as much on stereotypes as Uncle Tomery itself.

The Rushdie Legacy took the view that the Satanic Verses affair enshrined Muslims in Britain to develop a strong sense of identity. Now when did you last hear that said loud and clear on the radio? Far more depressing were the racist attitudes vented in *Us And Them* by "poor, white trash" views that are widespread but rarely get such unfiltered expression on the airwaves. By the end, one was struck by ironies and insights galore about race in Britain. And by the fact that nowhere else, outside BBC Radio, could such a season have been mounted.



Psst, want to be an artist?

How do the selectors of the Royal Academy's Summer Show and the Whitechapel Open decide which unknown artists get to show their work? LYNN MACRITCHIE finds out

I N THE darkness, two black squiggles float on a blue background. A projector clicks and another two squiggles appear. Another click, more squiggles. "I've suddenly hit an indecisive patch — shall we stop for tea?" Mark Sladen suggests. It is late afternoon in a windowless room at the Whitechapel Gallery in east London, and three of the gallery staff, selectors of this year's Whitechapel Open show, are taking a well-earned break. Around them, carousels filled with slides are stacked four deep. It is Thursday, and they are giving a second look to 120 entries, whittled down since Monday from an original 633, and needing to be cut by another 40. Since each artist can submit six slides, that makes 4,998 slides in the two-dimensional category alone. Not to mention 187 entries in sculpture, 81 proposals for installations and 51 entries in the film and video section.

Curator James Peto's eyes are so tired he can't wear his contact lenses. "Last night I went straight to the cinema from here. I can't believe I did that. . . walls community education officer Janice McLaren. It gets to them — all those hours in darkness, snacking on junk food and drinking coffee. Selecting is not a glamorous business.

Ever since the Royal Academy began its all with its first Annual Exhibition in 1769, "open to all artists of distinguished merit, where they may offer their performance to public inspection and acquire that degree of reputation and encouragement which they shall be deemed to



Judgment day . . . Above, an exhibit is assessed for the Whitechapel Open. Left, the Royal Academy, home to the Summer Show. The selectors may choose work because it makes them laugh and disconcert which they consider too dull or too clever

catchment zone, really mean — thousands of paintings, sculptures, things, most of which may only ever be publicly exhibited for the few seconds it takes to click the projector's remote control. Poor selectors. Aren't they tempted to run away, or grab a projector load or two at random and ignore the rest? "Oh no, it's too much of a responsibility," Janice McLaren says. Fine, but that leaves the problem of how to choose. As the images click by, decisions are made quickly, with little argument. First time through, the selectors don't know the artists' names, although they may be familiar with the work. Familiarity doesn't guarantee inclusion, however, and they may even be harder on artists they know, concerned both not to be prejudiced and also to give others that elusive first chance. Work can be in for making them laugh, "making me think of Betty Rubble's hairdo", or out for being too dull or clever.

Watching, I can feel myself silently making the same choices, but unable to define why. James Peto says: "You have to rely on a gut feeling, things that look fresh. . . these are the ones where the decision comes very easily." That's true. As an image fills the screen, either the heart sinks or the weary eyes light up, momentarily refreshed.

On-screen hits may be followed up by a studio visit to finalise the selection. At the RA, the painting selectors are looking for work with "a quality of excellence within its own terms", McComb explains. There work is restricted to paintings, drawings and prints, as well as sculpture and architectural projects, all seen in the original. The Whitechapel includes works in all media, with installation projects chosen from written proposals. "The aim is somewhere in the middle of a good-looking show and a show that represents all that has been seen," Peto says. For McComb, the final Academy hang is "a marvellous fruitcake", which tries to give each painter "their own energy and space".

At both venues, the concept of open submission is prized by exhibitors. There was outrage when, in 1992, the Whitechapel, in a bid to increase the show's prestige, invited contributions from established artists. Royal Academicians have been permitted to invite others to show at the RA since 1981. This year it set up a panel to find ways of encouraging a wider range of artists to submit work. After howls of protest, it has yet to meet. The Whitechapel does not seem to suffer from such identity crises. It attracts work from artists who define themselves as

Crime for a laugh

Television

Stuart Jeffries

S INCE Friday night comedy became as funny as a Gordon Brown speech on recent developments in economic theory, it's been necessary to look for laughs elsewhere in the schedules. Fortunately, the glut of crime and emergency services dramas fits the bill.

The real Friday night comedians are Michael Gambon, Michael Buerk and Juliet Morley, whose moralising interludes between the reconstructed dramas are unwittingly hilarious. This week *Expert Witness* (ITV) opened with the camera sweeping past a leather sofa to Gambon looking pensively out of a desolate-looking warehouse flat before turning to the camera to begin his introduction. That sofa really gave the game away: it was a homage to Roald Dahl's *Tales Of The Unexpected* and Alfred Hitchcock Presents. The costume designers should really think about giving Gambon an after-dinner Havana to suck on. Because that, in television tradition, is when murder stories get told: after dinner in a panelled room by a plausible fat man with a cigar.

Gambon is there to supply actorly gravitas and a wry sermon. What's funny is that the moral is beside the point: we want to be titillated not educated, but perhaps we will feel a little less unseemly in our voyeurism if it is prefaced by an edifying speech. "The more elaborate the criminal's plan, the more likely he'll be caught," said Gambon glibly between ruminative paces. "So often it seems that crime is cleverer than the criminal." He made his speech in a spirit of high seriousness which made it even more laughable. But that hauteur is fundamental: crime doesn't play.

The ensuing story, about a debt-ridden man, Robert Marlock, who killed to claim the life insurance, pushed Gambon's moral home. But even a

very stupid crime would have been cleverer than this criminal: he taped his victim's voice so he could play it over the phone to her parents, thus making it look as though she was making an alibi. But he made the call from a phone box, where passers-by thought it odd to see someone playing a ghetto blaster into the receiver. Soon, as happens in these programmes, the story degenerated into a hymn to the forensic skills of an acoustics expert.

Based on a 1992 murder case, *Expert Witness* was scripted schematically but nonetheless tellingly. Next to the reconstructions of 999 (BBC1), this was understated stuff. 999 can never resist including the in-makes-the-job-of-the-emergency-services heroes even more difficult, and whose role is to make viewers tut with cross superiority. Here a coastguard, who was directing a rescue mission from the Brighton seafarm with a mobile phone, was interrupted by a bloke who demanded that the sissy coastguard should get into the water and do his job. Didn't he realise that to question the emergency services in action is as absurd as the bad guy who thinks he can stop Bruce Willis surviving into the final reel?

Part of the pleasure of 999 is putting oneself in a superior position: you would never drive while sleepy at 3.30am, would never go to bed without properly stubbing that cigarette out, would never forget to put a battery in the smoke alarm. Would you? And if you're the sort of person who would, Michael and Juliet are there to explain why you shouldn't, in the best terms.

In the reconstructions, the victims are played by actors while the emergency services heroes appear, like Lassie, as themselves. No wonder: who would it even more laughable. But that hauteur is fundamental: crime doesn't play.

The ensuing story, about a debt-ridden man, Robert Marlock, who killed to claim the life insurance, pushed Gambon's moral home. But even a

Reviews

CLASSICAL

Philharmonia/Svetlanov/Kissin Festival Hall, London

A NY CONCERT by Evgeny Kissin now guarantees a full house, and there wasn't a spare ticket to be had for his first concerto appearance in London since he made his electrifying debut in April last year. Kissin appeared with the Philharmonia and Evgeny Svetlanov: it was an intriguing combination of Russian musicians — the 68-year-old conductor very much a product of the Soviet system, the pianist more than four decades younger and typical of the post-Soviet generation of artists in the way his career has been developed and promoted in the West — and one that worked marvellously.

The concerto was Rachmaninov's Third, and Kissin's exceptional account secured his place in the great tradition of the work's interpreters, from the composer himself through Horowitz, Ashkenazy and Argerich. It was a performance of many glittering facets — suggestive lyricism in

the opening theme, fearsome power in the first movement's climax, a scarcely credible evenness and lightness of touch in the faster episodes of the second. The finale was built wave upon wave to ever greater intensity, and the tension released in a flood of tone in the coda.

This was an interesting contrast with Kissin's recital at the Festival Hall three weeks ago, when his fearsome attack on everything in the programme suggested that, for all his brilliance, he had narrowed the scope of his playing. Here the dynamic range and tonal beauty were well-balanced, though the huge cadenza erupted with volcanic energy and an encore, Rachmaninov's G minor Prelude, was unleashed with irresistible power. Svetlanov, who made his admiration for his young collaborator obvious, was content mostly to subordinate the orchestra's contribution, providing a subdued and beautifully moulded accompaniment that left the piano in sharp relief: full weight was applied, though, for the final peroration to set the seal on an outstanding, all-encompassing performance.

Andrew Clements

DANCE

The Turning World The Place Theatre

T HE TURNING World's most recent shows have both been about transformation. Mathilde Monnier creates change from externals by ripping out the seating and turning the auditorium into a beautiful, white room. Izok Kovac, by contrast, occupies a stage that is only shabbily furnished, and works his transformations through tricks of the eye and mind.

The most important of these take place in his dancing bodies. Kovac's style in *String & String* has a hard edge that's softened and complicated by sprung folk rhythms and classical ornamentation, and within it he's very good at effecting magical shifts of vision. A solo phrase becomes dense and heavy when it's danced by several bodies together. A phrase is speeded up so that its steps become a blur of energy, or a fleeting image in the choreography turns comically literal.

But much odder changes occur outside the dancers' control. One minute we're simply listening to music, the next we see a film of the musicians playing it. We think we spot a figure, hunched among the players, and when the film vanishes this gawling fellow is actually on stage. Cheer-

fully, illogically, he wanders around crowning Mississippi blues. And so it goes on, in a style that may sound like student anarchy. But the work's wit and timing are so tartly wired, and the personalities of its performers so believable that, for all its deliberate deconstruction, it creates a genuine, lovable world.

Unlike Monnier's crude imitation of mad people, *L'Atelier En Pièces*, which has little to recommend it other than the specially constructed theatre within a theatre in which it is performed. Made from thick white paper and lit from outside, this is an exquisitely austere and luminous space that encloses us and the dancers.

Often during the performance the latter come right up to our seats, gibbering and gesturing. Their proximity should make us both vulnerable and receptive. But there's little to respond to. Each dancer has a few "mad" routines of speech or movement which they perform tirelessly for 80 minutes. And though Monnier claims these are based on observations of real patients, she's developed them so scrupulously that we really don't care. What we do take away is the knowledge of what it's like being trapped — which gives us at least some inkling of the trauma of being in an institution.

□ The Turning World season continues at The Place (0171-387 0031), London W14

Judith Mackrell

Where's the soul?

G ABRIELLE'S smart. She's survived a No 1 debut single, and you don't do that without being smart, or getting very good advice. Dreams, the massive hit which could so easily have become a lead disc around Gabrielle's neck, was modern enough to be based around a sample, even if that sample was of

homespun folkie Tracey Chapman's *Fast Car*. Things have moved on so swiftly since then that Gabrielle could not have hoped to compete. Instead, she had the good sense to re-emerge with a single, *Give Me A Little More Time*, which carefully recreated the American R&B pop sound of the late 60s. This is the little

black dress of musical genres. Understated and tasteful. It suits any occasion.

Gabrielle, too, is understated and tasteful, fronting a large group of happily laid-back musicians on the small stage of London's Jazz Cafe; not so much a head as a soul. The balcony is lined with murmuring diners, and it is an open question as to which accompanies which, the music or the food. The set is immaculate and bland, each

number cannily crafted to trigger the stylistic echoes that make a new song sound vaguely and agreeably familiar. Gabrielle doesn't go in for bravura displays of technique or rampant faux-emotionalism. Her forte is the brief, neat tune.

This is a technique in itself, as every *Teacup* Live. It spurns the audience the embarrassing demand that they rise to the emotional pitch of the performer. To dismiss it as superficial or plastic would

be to misunderstand it. It's like a recent photograph, lovingly aged and sepia-toned by hand.

It's understandable that Gabrielle, having sensibly done away with her eyepatch, should have replaced it with an extravagant forelock. It gives her a sorely needed sense of mystique. She's obviously a clever lady. And being clever never had anything to do with soul.



David Bennun Gabrielle . . . well-crafted

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MICHAEL BILLINGTON hails Trevor Griffiths's new play

History in the making

T HE TEST of any history play is whether it both pins down the past and reverberates in the present. Trevor Griffiths's *Who Shall Be Happy?* — presented by Belfast's Mad Cow Productions — triumphantly passes that test, dealing both with Danton's last days and the plight of the popular revolutionary in oppressive times.

This 90-minute two-hander is set in a Paris prison-cell in 1794: the height of the Great Terror. The prisoner, Danton, strives to keep alive his hope that the original liberating fervour of the Revolution is not extinct and that there may yet be an uprising on his behalf. He bribes his jailer, Henry, to smuggle out a coded letter entailing support. But Henry is

guided by his instinct for self-preservation and his doubts as to whether this is the real Danton or a lookalike decoy set up by the Committee of Public Safety. One of the many ideas Griffiths plays with in this piece is the extent to which revolution turns its protagonists into theatrical performers.

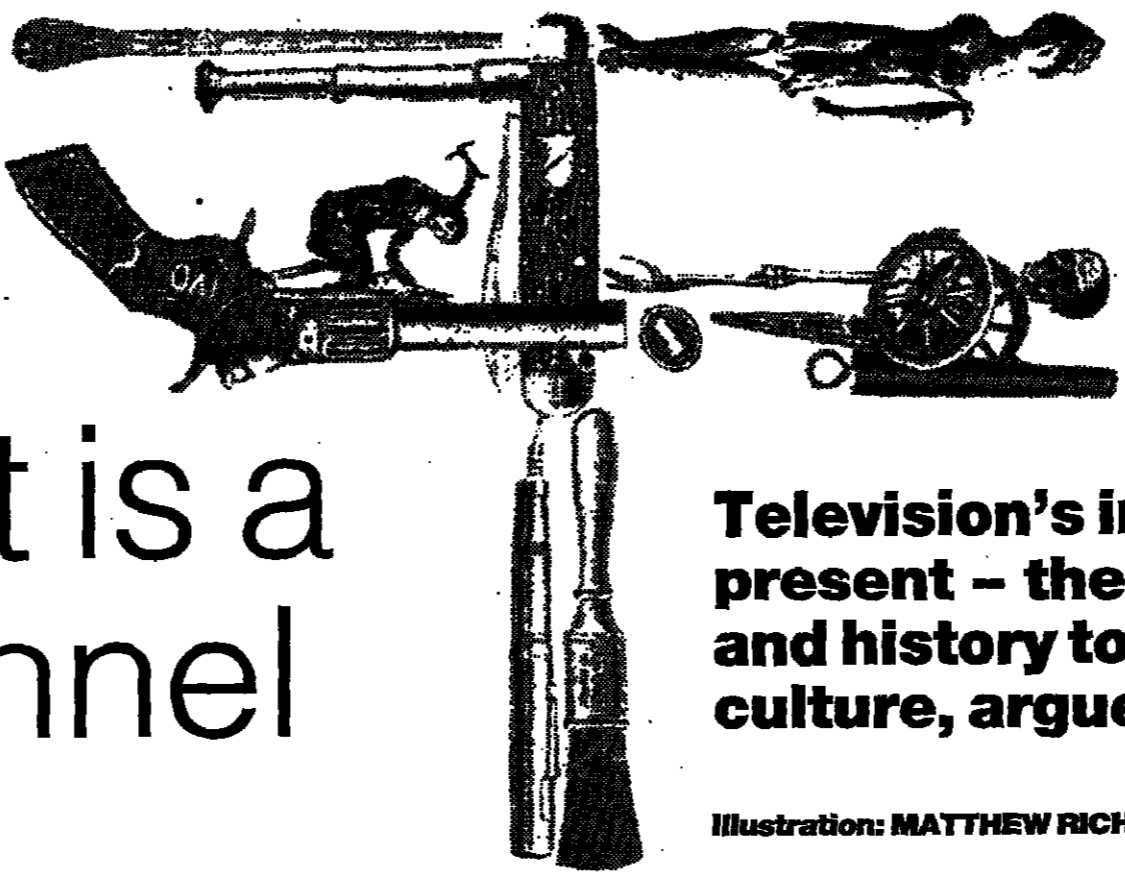
But Griffiths's most striking achievement is making the past a metaphor for the present. His Danton represents the plight of the impassioned idealist who finds everything he believes in under attack: both from elitist tyrannies and from what Danton calls "the free dance of capital". If there is a guiding theme, it is of the inexorable nature of hope and of the belief that radical change must always operate

for the benefit of the many rather than the few.

Past, present and future blend with seamless fluidity. Griffiths also reminds us that a one-set two-hander can still tackle vast public themes: his own production embraces modern history and the eternal struggle for freedom. It also contains a stunning performance from Stanley Townsend whose Danton combines brawn, brain, sensuality and residual optimism and a deft one from Kuldinder Ghir whose jailer shows the canny cupidity of the new-model citizen. This is political theatre at its most intelligent and Griffiths's best play in years.

At the Bush (0181-743 3388), London W14, until June 29.

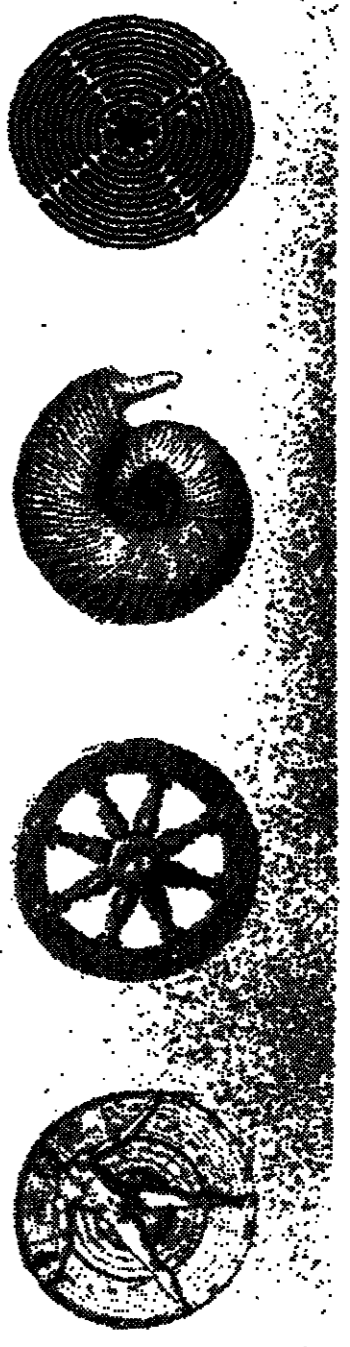
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The past is a lost channel

Television's infatuation with the present - the actual - is driving art and history to the margins of our culture, argues MELVYN BRAGG

Illustration: MATTHEW RICHARDSON



TELEVISION'S obsession with the present is exciting and successful and ultimately dangerous. It is the equivalent of the get-rich-quick fast-farming which so rapidly made an agricultural desert of so many fertile prairies.

Television does the present with such ease. It is the communication world's performance on the high trapeze. Is there a war? Television will be there. The Olympics are made for television — and, as some suspect, certain military skirmishes are too. A Caesarean birth, a breakdown, a scandal, a political disaster — Enoch Powell, that most erudite modern conservative, said that politics is not real today unless it is on television and there is not too much exaggeration there.

There seems something made for the instant about television. Even canned shows strive mightily for the sound of live laughter. You push the button and tune into now.

Recently on British television there was a little film about a man who had decided that television was better than life. He was a Scot — I say that to introduce the notion that he was not a slack-minded couch potato numbed with boredom: in fact, he put up a spirited case.

What was going on in the town in which he lived was very dull — and the shots we saw proved it. By turning on television he could take part in a more real, a more vivid, a bigger world. QED. His wife Hoovered around him.

Even television's exercises in history tend to be rather simple-minded exercises in nostalgia — comforting on the one hand (what a lovely world it was then, with horses and crinolines and swords and honour and women in their place and everyone else in their place) and usefully, skilfully uneasy on the other hand — that we today have fallen so far, that there is a lost Eden, that we are still the children of the Fall, a profound conviction which characterises life

in civilisations outside and before our own Christianity which, of course made of it a pillar of belief.

But the present is not enough. Its surface excitement can not only become superficial — history, philosophy, poetry, all these are fully capable and have often proved themselves to be superficial — they can drag us into a quivering rootlessness, a nervous apprehension and reliance on the next fix. If the present is all we have then we lose the often inadequate but clearly essential support system of what has gone before.

Does television owe the past a debt? Strictly, commercially, if the public is sovereign — no. Should it owe the past a debt? Of course you would expect me to say yes to that and I would like to delay that for a moment or two. If television owes its audience anything then the obligation is the same as that of print: to which the rough justice answer is — *what is demanded.*

"The public," wrote the German playwright Friedrich Schiller in 1784, "is now everything to me — my preoccupation, my sovereign and my friend". Now, because of its slow growth over half a millennium, serving various elites and fractions of society, being appropriated by religion here and revolution there, for so long in the hands of so few and those few most often those in power and authority or zealous subversives, print has a history which it still respects.

Academic publishing thrives as generously — some strictly commercial competitors would say more generously — thanks to hidden subsidies — as popular publishing. The rocket growth of knowledge, particularly in science, and this discipline and many other highly varied groups have dug in and taken a hold on the market's imagination of print over many centuries.

Television is the biggest short-term fix in the history of information. It is the hit. I remember Martin Scorsese telling me that he was recording every day's television —

for a year so that he would have a true record, a profound insight into at least one year of his times.

But if television is not to suck out the goodness of the soil with fast crops and the thoughtless economy solely of the short term return, it has to reinvent. It has to reinvent for its own future. If it merely serves up the present, its future is bound to be less and less rich because it will have no deep past to draw on.

You chop down trees for present use: you plant new trees for future store. You know which trees to plant because you have studied the past and so the forested world as we have known and assaulted and reclaimed it goes round for some more time.

Time to come out of the closet and say: yes. Yes to debt. Television does owe the past a debt which it needs to pay for many reasons, including its own survival. Without that payment, television — lacking the long and usefully tortuous history of print which has been intertwined in the heart of so many significant struggles of mankind to grow and prosper over the last 500 years — will risk being sidelined by makers and viewers alike as merely the quick fix, the easy option, the infant's comforter, the adult's childish thing, to be put away in the grown-up world.

Television can do this in many ways. My concern here is to make the case for the arts. On the surface, we do not have a promising situation. In much of the world, arts programmes are under pressure. Money is tighter and tighter in the USA and in much of Europe: ratings are relentless, the eagle feeding off the liver of Prometheus night after night and demanding more again day after day; the public interest in such programmes — almost everywhere off-peak on major channels — is declared to be marginal or even marginal (despite that interest often being expressed in millions of viewers). I am even informed that some media moguls have been overheard in their sleep to mutter — who needs them? Who

wants them? That same sovereign public.

Remember, this is just a case for the arts — history, social studies, politics, they will find their own champions. In some ways they need them less than the arts. Or they have found them already. Ted Turner, for instance, is currently backing a mammoth 20-part series on the history of the cold war.

Could we find a similar champion outside the few exceptional subsidised TV systems — for which we give much thanks — in Europe? Perhaps from the great tradition of American philanthropy a Carnegie of our time — Bill Gates is almost within earshot — will see the future through the establishment of a well-funded, commissioning, creative arts channel, which will be his surest memorial as art has been again and again throughout history.

Or is it possible that those who influence those moguls who control the great media networks will find a space in their imagination for, well, imagination?

WOULD it not be boldly imaginative to be the first patron-cultural saint of the people's medium? After all, the sacred salve in centuries gone by, got their rewards for dedication to the many, to the mass of the earth. It is not at the moment as fashionable around the millionaire glittering cocktail — or rather, selective mineral water — circuit, but wouldn't it be a marvel-

ous, modern and lasting thing to do, especially in the New World — to bring culture lavishly and ungrudgingly to the people of the television age?

In short — by way of a playful digression, perhaps, but one which could if taken up have enormous and beautiful consequences — could not those in charge of the schedule on the main channels in your worlds and mine be persuaded to give the arts a chance?

So many people are now interested in the arts. Like the character in Molière who did not know that what he was speaking was prose, millions of people who are absorbed for instance in movies and music of many varieties are open to the past and to the works of the imagination. They are collaborators in art — just as Borges saw his ideal reader to be.

The idea of a past which has a present tense is easy in their minds. Were television more fully to exploit that — as it tries to do in some places already — then this would be one way of giving acknowledgement to a depth of interest which could be a storehouse for the future. For it has so very often happened that the dynamic future has only come from a willingness to understand and rework the past — which is what that most unflinching liberator, the Renaissance, meant. At the very least, arts programmes could stop the sheltering, protective sand dunes from sliding out to sea.

Let me now steer towards a conclusion with some particu-

lar examples taken, for obvious reasons of convenience, from my own experience.

What could arts documentary programmes bring, what parts could they reach that are reached by no other programmes, what do they reveal that matters?

A very great deal. When David Lean — whose films, on television, the bombing left of all movies, all schoolboys have seen — talks about Noel Coward and the second world war and the craft of the long shot and the whole hinterland of working with actors, then, I believe, people listen and learn in the best of all possible ways, without feeling forced.

A direct line is established to a British theatrical tradition, a tradition of skills and moreover the complexity of a loved work — a movie — is outlined in a way which enables viewers, particularly younger viewers, to glimpse at least the complexity of the adult work-world — as it were.

When Stephen Spielberg speaks of his childhood obsessions in films we can see, again in the work of someone we, the viewers, have enjoyed and respected, the power of devotion needed to carry through a singular work: it is like a boy being able to watch, daily, one of the sculptors working on the Cathedral of Autun and understanding what is involved so that he too could go on and attempt the same.

For the burden of this piece is that television's future growth must lie in a steady cultivation of the past. What use will viewers be to television strangled as it could become in an eternal present with viewers increasingly surprised that there was a second world war, let alone a first, let alone the Holocaust, the Bolsheviks, Robespierre, Newton, the Puritan Fathers, Chartres Cathedral, Alfred the Great, the Roman night, the Greek mind?

This is far from fanciful. To expand a market you develop a taste and as the market of television is the world past and present, to miss out the

past, to underinform, is to restrict your possibilities.

There is also, some believe, no little responsibility in using this extravagant, popular medium to grow the awareness of the population.

I suppose television could rely on schools to do this, or on print or radio, but to rely on others to do the seeding work is a doomed short-termism, which so many other industries have realised, often too late. Television's wide reach as a mass informer means that it should take up more of the share of stocking up for the future, not less.

SOUND BITES and tokenism rot the system as surely as an unbalanced diet of cakes and sweets. Television is at last the very medium of democracy. Democracy is having trouble discovering those willing to patronise and develop its higher instincts — no problem at all in finding those keen to exploit the power of its lowest or most commercial common denominator.

Yet if it wants to dig into the deeper sympathies and habits of viewers, it must dig into those parts of the mind and the imagination which currently it fears because big audiences do not automatically follow. Little scores is a very good thought. Nature has not done badly with it and the triumph of Darwinian theory shows, among much else, that struggle and innovative adaptation based on previous success leads to the real winners. A bland acceptance of the status quo is doomed.

So, arts documentaries and other documentaries and testing drama, and all of that much more regularly plumb in the middle of peak-time, big channel schedules? Why not? Suck it and see. Look at Gulliver, which has just surprised us all. Arts, of course, being only one of many ways to develop an audience for the future through the creative accounting for the past.

And television is creative — whether it accepts it or not — already in its brief span there

are programmes (comedy, drama, natural history, documentary) which could be buried under any Millennial Stone to be dug up and viewed in the year 3000AD to explain to our descendants the way it was now. And by 3000 the exploding universe of television will probably be out there in the exploding universe itself and beaming back the news into every street and office and shop and room on planet earth.

For television is as rampant as a raging virus: it is up to us, programme makers, programme controllers, in collaboration with the viewers, to make it benign, to make it create new and unexpected appetites that it can satisfy — and to put it to the service of the best that has brought us here over the last 5,000 or 10,000 years.

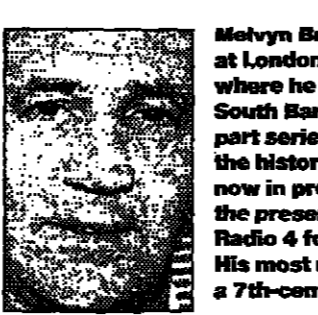
Like Schiller, television can now say, and conclude by repeating, "The public is now everything to me — my preoccupation, my sovereign and my friend." The public can deliver a sleeping draught to humanity or an open access opportunity to help enrich this revolutionary global democratic culture and cultivate the wide benefits which have only just begun to appear.

Television can help democracy, which is still a very new and rather fragile growth, because at last it is a system which has inherently undoubted capacity for high quality.

The key word in my sentence from Schiller is "sovereign". If the public is truly to be sovereign then it must be given power. That power is knowledge. If television can become the bringer of knowledge as well as so much else then the world will be a safe place for intelligence and a place which recognises and explores the boundless variety of human experience. Television can do that. All it needs is the will. That is all that has ever been needed.

This is part of the keynote speech to the Barff International Television Festival in Vancouver.

Melvyn Bragg, May 1996



Melvyn Bragg is Controller of Arts at London Weekend Television where he is responsible for the South Bank Show and an eight-part series with Simon Rattle on the history of 20th century music now in production. He has been the presenter of Start-the-Week on Radio 4 for the past seven years. His most recent novel is *Credo*, a 7th-century epic

صكرا من الاصل



Lovely on the water: Peter Bird on the Serpentine, London, a confined space for an ocean man

PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNETH SALINDERS

Peter Bird

Down to the sea again

PETER Bird's last and most difficult project came to an end this week when his 29-foot craft Sector II, en route from Russia to North America, was found capsized by a ship responding to a mayday call.

An ocean rower of great experience, Peter was meticulous when it came to safety, and until the boat is examined it will not be known why the craft didn't self-right itself as it was designed to do (and as it had done in the past). His boat was a state-of-the-art construction, and he was perhaps the most capable of all ocean rowers — 31 in all since Harbo and Samuelson first rode across the Atlantic in 1937. Peter also had a healthy respect for the sea.

His one great fear, however, was going overboard and not being able to catch up with a wind-blown boat. He wasn't a great swimmer, when he and I anchored off a beach in St Lucia after our 1974 Atlantic crossing, my suggestion that we swim the last 10 yards to shore was countered with "Shit! I've never swum that far".

Peter was born in Bromley, Kent, the third of four children. When his father moved to work at the Royal Mint, he was sent to the English Martyrs' School, Tower Hill, and

St Mary's, Cadogan Square. He left school at 15, completely unqualified, and went into an advertising agency as a general dogbody. When the firm went bust he bought a sleeping bag, and with a copy of Jack Kerouac's *On The Road* tucked under his arm, hitch-hiked around Europe. This was the start of a new way of life — the start of his real education. From that point on, whenever the urge came, Peter would quit whatever job he was doing, and be off — hitching, walking, sailing, circumnavigating the world as a ship's photographer.

But despite Peter's irrepressible wanderlust, he always missed home, we could be hobnobbing in mid-Atlantic under a hot tropical sun, silver clouds of flying fish bursting out of the sea, and he would be thinking of London, family and home.

When we met in 1972, Peter was saving to build a catamaran. I was saving to finance the first trans-world rowing voyage, and when I told this big, bespectacled guy in bright blue boots that I was looking for a crew his eyes gleamed. "I'm your man," he announced. And so he was.

Peter loved working on this kind of project; the planning, the preparation, the company and the long dreamy days of

big skies and sliding seas. He was a great companion, keeping us entertained with riddle songs and stories of his travels. Once when he was working naked his penis suffered a dreadful sunburn. By the next morning he had made a jacket strap out of a woolly jersey sleeve and slipped it over his painful member, making him look like a deformed elephant.

For our separate reasons we abandoned the voyage after completing the Atlantic leg and returned to UK. I settled, but Peter never did. A few years later he told me that another ocean called and he was preparing Britannia II for the Pacific. He would go solo — he would be by himself, and for himself.

HALF-WAY across he hit a reef and the boat broke up. Bits of Britannia were later

shipped to the maritime museum in Exeter. Undeterred, apart from a painful apology to the boat's owner, Peter, with the help of the Hawaiian boat-builder Foo Lim, launched a new boat. He set off from San Francisco, crossing the Pacific from east to west in 294 days, before piling up on the Great Barrier Reef. He was rescued just in time by the Australian navy.

That he was the first solo

rower to have crossed the Pacific was not enough for Peter. He could not settle. As if hooked by some exotic drug he sought the next fix. This was to be crossing the Pacific from west to east, Russia to North America. Three abortive attempts followed after tremendous effort not only from him, on the part of Ken Crutchlow and his back-up team.

The first attempt lasted 804 days (the longest solo rowing voyage yet recorded) but took its toll. Afterwards Peter told me how huge the seas were, how relentless and cold the life was. The satellite tracking print-out of his daily positions looked like a double spiral's web. His frustration must have been incredible. But he continued with two more attempts.

There was undoubtedly a dichotomy in Peter's life: he was a dangerous adventurer, and at the same time a warm and loving family man — his partner Polly and young son Louis were central in his life. But he knew he could never settle to a normal life. The ocean had seeped into him and he had unfinished business.

Early this year, he returned to Russia to make his fourth attempt. None of us ever got to see Peter's departure, and we all had our own fears

and forebodings. Polly understood his motives. She found it difficult, but she didn't stop him.

On March 27, he pulled away from Nakhodka to attempt the 6,000 mile crossing. Only the French rower Gerard D'Aboville had successfully crossed from Japan to the US. Peter had added the extra passage from Russia, and wouldn't make it easier for himself by changing the route.

Peter spoke to his mother, Joan, via a satellite link, a few days before he died. He was feeling fine, the sea was rough and there was a contrary wind, but these were the usual setbacks. When the wrecked boat was discovered the family did not clutch at straws for very long. The sea was too rough and too cold for him to survive.

Peter Bird was a man with a huge passion that demanded much of him. He took highly calculated risks, but never subscribed to the gungo antics and patriotism of some professional adventurers. He was a caring, thoughtful man, a friend of little arrogance and much warmth.

Derek King
Peter Bird, ocean-rower, born February 19, 1947; lost at sea June 2, 1995

Jack Massey

The green grass courts of the early morning

JACK Massey, who has died aged 85, taught himself to be one of the finest tennis groundsmen in the world, bringing the 18 grass courts of the Northern Tennis Club to such perfection that Wimbledon staff took the train to Manchester to ask his advice.

Neighbours of the club were familiar with his Sam starts during summer tournaments, pottering round the courts to check for undisciplined patches of grass or traces of moss, and staying until twilight finally faded at 11pm.

His 34 years as head groundsman, succeeding his father Edwin in the post in 1949, spanned the era of Little Mo Connolly, Billie Jean King and Jimmy Connors. All won the Northern Tournament which, until the eighties, was a prelude to Wimbledon during the brief grass season.

Massey was born in the year that his father started work at the club's spacious grounds in Didsbury, the south Manchester suburb favoured at the time by the city's elite. He was a hero to the Guardian's editor C P Scott. Massey's grandparents had all been in domestic service. Massey spent the minimum time required by law at Didsbury national school, before joining the cotton industry as a clerk.

Almost two decades in textiles gave Massey the famous "Manchester feel" for cloth; he could close his eyes, rub his thumb and forefinger over a swatch and guess accurately at its origin and, frequently, the



Manners spanned the Tournament era of Little Mo Connolly, Billie Jean King and Jimmy Connors

mill where it had been woven or the thread spun. This talent transferred to grass, with its multiple varieties, when Jack joined Edwin as a part-time assistant, following fire service in Manchester during the second world war.

He became a full-time groundsman in 1947, succeeded his father after two years, and set about combining his practical experience with academic knowledge of the science of turf and soil management. He progressed, he kept himself up-to-date, subscribing to papers and joining the Institute of Groundsmanship.

It was this combination of skills observed in his father's work, his "feel"

and a voracious appetite for new knowledge which made Massey a supreme custodian of grass. Although he was to see the Northern Tournament decline in prestige, as highly paid stars on the international circuit bridled at leaving London, his work was known throughout the tennis world and the All-England Club visited to examine his technique in the sixties.

After retiring as head groundsman in 1984, Massey served as manager of the club for three years and became an honorary life vice-president. His interest in tennis never lapsed, and he was vice-president of the Institute of Groundsmanship at the time of his death. He leaves his wife Nancy, a retired administrator, his daughters Hilary, a student adviser, and Doreen, (professor of geography at the Open University) and two grandchildren. The Club, known as the Wimbledon of the North, was packed for a memorial gathering this week, which heard how officers were initially sceptical about the stories of Jack's Sam start.

"I decided to test it but only managed to get to Didsbury at 5.30am," said club president Jim Cochrane. "Jack was on the courts and he said with a wink: 'There's plenty you can do to help Jim, but you're half an hour late.'"

Martin Wainwright
Jack Massey, groundsman, born 27 December 1910; died 27 May, 1995

Weekend Birthdays



THERE'S an account of Johnny Depp, 33 tomorrow, on location for Arizona. He is making a lot of noise, and he is wearing a black hat. He sounds endearing, as if he were working his way through a correspondence course in Vernacular Romanticism — you know, first term you drug and drink and get into pissing matches with Iggy Pop, second semester you are eaten by a bed in a Freddy film and become a famous teen wet dream playing a narc on Fox TV, then you have to swoot up the Marlon Brando profiles and attempt variants on bodybuilding, like hanging from the side of the Los Angeles Beverly Centre by your fingertips, trashing a hotel room and hashing a Canadian security guard. (Visual work, including the decor of your nightclub, The Viper Room, and your collection of laqueered piranhas, may also be submitted). Pretty much posing, of course: the man's real gift, to guess from Don Juan De Marco or Ed Wood, seems to be an energised amiability combined with the radiance of hurt. His repeated eagerness to give rather than give him away — there used to be a Californian bumper sticker "Honk if you haven't been engaged to Johnny Depp" — Byron or Brando might have seduced — or even married in haste — but did either ever stop for an engagement ring?

Today's birthdays: Colin Baker, actor, 53; Sir William Barlow, president, Royal Academy of Engineering, 72; Barbara Bush, former US First Lady, 71; Lindka

Clerach, fashion designer, 44; Michael Codron, theatrical producer, 66; Prof Alice Coleman, geographer and urban planner, 73; Prof Francis Crick, biologist, physicist, DNA discoverer, 80; Julie Driscoll, singer, 49; Hugh Faulkner, director, Persistent Virus Disease Research Foundation, 60; Earl Ferrer, junior, environment minister, 67; Dudley Fishburn, Conservative MP, 50; Helen Fraser, publisher, 47; Gwen Harwood, poet, 76; Ray Illingworth, cricketer, chairman, England selectors, 64; Prof Sir Michael Levey, art historian, 79; Lady Shirley Littler, chairman, the Gaming Board, 64; Milliecent Martin, actress, 62; Prof Terence Morris, criminologist, 65; Tony Mottram, tennis player, 76; Doug Mountjoy, snooker player, 54; Alison Moyet, rock singer, 35; Sir Cranley Onslow, Conservative MP, 70; Sir Eric Parker, former chief executive and co-founder, Trafalgar House, 63; Brig Gael Ramsey, Commander, Aldershot Area (Army), 54; Nick Rhodes, rock keyboard player, 34; Joana Rivers, entrepreneur, 60; Nancy Sinatra, 55; Norma Shaw, bowler, 59; Dr Robert Stevens, master, Pembroke College, Oxford, 63; Martin Taylor, chief executive, Barclays Bank, 44; John Thompson, former Director of Radio, IBA, 67; Marjorie Thompson, former chair, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, 39; Derek Underwood, cricketer, 49; Dame Anne Warburton, head of EC Commission on women in Bosnia, 62; Graham Watson, literary agent, 63.

Tomorrow's other birthdays: Peter Beazley, Conservative MEP, 74; Tony Britton, actor, 72; Ossie Clark, dress designer, 54; Prof Bryan Cole, FRS, physicist, reactor Imperial College, London, 70; Robert Cummings, actor, 86; Michael J Fox, actor, 35; Prof Geraint Gruffydd, Welsh and Celtic language authority, 68; Jeremy

Harvie, chairman, W H Smith and Son, 58; Doug Henderson, Labour MP, 47; Roy Hughes, Labour MP, 71; Derek Hunt, chairman, MFI Furniture, 57; Peter Kilfoyle, Labour MP, 50; Sir Nicholas Lloyd, former editor, the Daily Express, 54; Robert McNamara, former president, World Bank, 80; Michael Mates MP, former Conservative minister, 62; Alice Pollock, dress designer, 54; Charles Saatchi, advertising executive, 53; Peter Sanders, former chief executive, CRE, 58; Steve Smith Eccles, jockey, 41; Susan Strange, professor of International relations, University Institute, 73; David Troughton, actor, 48.

Death Notices

HARTLEY, Brian Joseph, C.M.G., O.B.E., died peacefully after a short illness in Mombasa, Kenya on Wednesday 29 May 1995.

KEITH-ROACH on June 10 1995, Pringle Barrard (nee Massey) died peacefully. Deeply loved by her family and friends and much missed by the community. Funeral service on Monday 17th June at 11.00am. Enquiries to Parker and Stone 01283 61283.

OWTRAM, Philip (Richard), died suddenly 21st May 1995. He was a devoted father, a loving husband, a caring son, a loyal friend, a devoted employee, a devoted citizen. He was a member of the 11th June at St. Mary's Church, East End. The family are grateful for the many donations to the charity. The family are 14 Kenyon 0171 468 468.

SQUIRES, Professor Esam, opened his bathing, but was called back to the post office on Monday 29th June. His contribution will be an everlasting memory.

TERRY, Hannah Mary (nee Parnell) widow of Raymond Francis Terry died peacefully on May 29th, at Worthing, aged 94.

Acknowledgments

Grateful thanks to St Jude for request granted.

In Memoriam

NIGHTWAGLE, Jo, would have been 28 on Sunday. Her joyous spirit survives in all who love her.

Memorial Services

GUDDON, A Thanksgiving Service for the late Mrs. Guddon will be held in the Chapel, Imperial College, London, on Thursday 22nd June 1995 (10.15-11.15) on the 17th floor. There will be a reception after the service.

To place your announcement telephone 0171 713 4567. Fax 0171 713 4128.

Glyn Worsnip

Lone broadcast voice

GLYN Worsnip, who has died aged 57, carved a wayward path through the arts and media for nearly 30 years. He was in the theatre for a decade, then slid gracefully across to television and radio, with some print journalism thrown in.

In television he served five years before Esther Rantzen's *That's Life* mast, acting as wispish chorus and media go-between persona. His affection for her was always clear-headed. After one spat, he said that she had hit out: "Considering the differences in our relative positions, Glyn, it's amazing to think that you are in fact older than I am." I bit back some remark about how when she was 18 and hard-pressed, she had been glad to copy out my essays. A wounded Esther was a dangerous thing.

After *That's Life* came a

period as gaddy reporter and commentator in BBC Current Affairs. Although his regular contract was painfully terminated, Worsnip's freelance prospects looked good, until illness. He felt increasingly unsteady. Then, as he recalls in his memoir *Up The Down Escalator*: "On August 1, 1986 I had my head examined." The cerebellum had shrunk. The doctor pronounced cerebellar ataxia. "You might be a zombie in five years; it might be 20." CA affects speech and balance first, a double-impairment that put an end to regular broadcast work.

For over a year he soldiered on, brushing aside muttered comments that he might, unusually, have had more than one for the road. Then, in early 1988, he came out, on radio, in the programme *A Lone Voice*, properly considered a classic. Wheelchairs and long periods of hospital

followed. Worsnip reported in 1991: "I can't now stand or walk without support. I can only write and read a few words at a time. I am tired of living, and scared of dying." He threw his remaining energies into a better understanding of a rare disease, and the economic distress that often goes with it: "We are the only class who are not encouraged to save. If we have no money, we are supported at subsistence level, by public expenditure. If we have some savings, we must spend them until we are poor enough to qualify for support — again at subsistence level."

Worsnip was born in 1938 in Gloucestershire, and his last years were spent back there. He commented on his lengthy illness: "I lose my temper, I cry, I flounce, I despair. I am not an heroic figure making the best of a downhill battle." For those



Glyn Worsnip: 'I am tired of living, scared of dying'

who knew him the very self-disparagement was in character, inaccurate and unjustified. And his many friends who continued to visit him over the long last years will always remember a cheerful welcome mustered even against appalling odds.

Brian Wenham

Esther Rantzen writes: Glyn and I first met at Oxford where we became very close friends. He was a brilliant performer

in student revue and cabaret, and I used to patter around his glamorous shadow.

At the time when *That's Life* started Glyn was working in the professional theatre. We were looking for presenters and I was a bit timid about asking him if he would consider a television show. But he came along to the auditions just for the fun of it. He was so obviously perfect for the job. He could sing, was an excellent mimic (particularly good at French accents) and also had a journalistic sharpness.

When he left *That's Life* he went on to make documentaries, and made a particularly memorable one about about the Parsis. His radio work was also very popular. When illness struck, he made a wonderful Horizon programme about his disease — drawing attention to how little is understood about these rare conditions.

What I will miss most about Glyn is his wit. Almost to the end he was making jokes. And he never lost his passionate warmth about the people and the causes he cared about.

Glyn Worsnip, born September 2 1938; died June 6, 1995

Face to Faith

We need sects education

James Bampfield

RIGHT now a new wave of anti-sect paranoia is sweeping the world. All ruling bodies, political parties and the media seem unanimous in their suspicion and hostility towards sects and any group of people labelled a "sect" are automatically viewed with prejudiced eyes.

After the dis-Order of the Solar Temple, the French Government drew up a list of more than 150 groups which they considered to be dangerous and a report on the phenomenon. They are now investigating these groups, looking for evidence of "coercion", "exploitation", and "mental destabilisation". More alarming is the attention the report pays to the dangers

of "breaking away from the references normally acknowledged by society." Does that rule out alternative medicine, education, clothing and toothpaste?

I belong to a spiritual movement called the Wild Goose Company, some of whose members live at Energy World, a community in rural France. The founder, and my spiritual teacher, is Michael Barnett, who endeavours to teach and share his knowledge with anyone who is interested in Energy World has been placed on the government list.

Extraordinary though it may seem, I chose to come here of my own accord — because the spiritual call is stronger than that of financial, family, or social stability. The only thing I am coerced into doing is the dishwashing

when it is my turn; and I work in the community without financial reward.

Energy World was recently invaded by police without warning at seven one morning. Exits were sealed, and all the computer files were commandeered; Mr Barnett's private quarters were ransacked. The pretext was a tax investigation, but there is little doubt as to its real purpose and it has been followed up by various police summonses concerning our small schools, as well as immigration issues. Since this harassment started, the local bank has closed the Energy World account and the local insurance company has refused to insure the community. A regional magazine has published a leading article on Energy World which is loaded with snide, misleading, and

derogatory comments. The article is prefaced with an editorial which says: "There is no such thing as an harmless sect." Pontius Pilate would have heartily agreed.

The result is to stoke up public opinion. When Energy World built two sewage-filtering lakes, to protect the environment, a rumour went round the neighbourhood that these were built as repositories for any human corpses left after your average "cult activity". On a visit to the UK I was inundated with remarks about "free sex" (do ordinary citizens pay for it?) and "brainwashing".

Prejudice takes years to erode, so what is needed is some kind of political/legal recognition and protection for new religious movements equal to that received by racial minorities and homosexuals. It does not seem outrageously liberal to allow a group of people to gather together and experiment with styles of living that differ from those of conventional society. Nor is it so illogical for people

to want to do this, given that most come from less-than-perfect societies. Undoubtedly, some track should be kept of religious communities — more monitoring of Aum Shinrikyo and the Order of the Solar Temple might have

saved lives. Much of the government's report makes good sense, but the wall of prejudice in society, and among those who implement the government campaign, is such that any group which is on this list may find itself imme-

diately the subject of discrimination. Of course the master-disciple relationship and communal living are open to abuse. But these very structures — Christ and his disciples, Buddha and his ashram, Plato and his academy —

provided the inspiration for some of the most important steps taken in understanding the nature of human existence.

James Bampfield lives and works at Energy World

Doonesbury



BY GARRY TRUDEAU

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Money Guardian

Savers feel pain of surprise cut

Teresa Hunter

B RITAIN'S nine million mortgage borrowers will this weekend be celebrating the lowest borrowing costs for 31 years but it is not all good news on the home front. The Inland Revenue yesterday underlined the fragility of any recovery in the housing market, reporting that the 1 per cent drop in mortgage rate over the past six months has not pushed prices up, except in some pockets of the country. Furthermore, the number of purchases has declined over the same period. This confirms the picture painted by the Halifax Building Society when it rushed to cut its mortgage rate in the wake of the Chancellor's move. It reduced its standard rate by 0.28 of a point, to 6.99 per cent, setting the benchmark for smaller competitors. The Woolwich, Alliance & Leicester, Barclays, NatWest and Britannia were among those which followed the Halifax, with the Abbey National charging the slightly higher rate of 7.04 per cent on smaller loans.

Mortgage institutions which have pledged to remain building societies rather than convert to banks have set their rates even lower. The Bradford & Bingley has a new low rate of 6.74 per cent, while the Coventry has dipped even lower to 6.24 per cent for savers of five years' standing. The Nationwide, which already has a 6.74 per cent lending rate, is reviewing charges to borrowers.

Direct Line, which recently began selling mortgages over the telephone, cut its mortgage rate to 6.05 per cent. But lower rates for borrowers mean even smaller returns for savers, although those institutions committed to mutu-

Costs fall on home front

Monthly saving on a 25-year repayment mortgage (with Miras)
Rate: 6.99 per cent unless shown otherwise

Mortgage repayment £	Monthly saving £		Mortgage repayment £	Monthly saving £	
	Halifax	Coventry (6.24%)		Britannia	Direct Line (6.05%)
30,000	194.99	4.12	30,000	182.83	3.85
60,000	402.46	9.13	60,000	382.88	8.58
90,000	616.80	14.17	90,000	582.93	13.30
Abbey					
30,000 (7.04%)	195.27	3.96	30,000	194.47	3.96
60,000	402.45	8.77	60,000	402.45	8.74
90,000	616.79	13.62	90,000	617.71	13.62
Woolwich					
30,000	194.46	4.12	30,000	177.88	3.00
60,000	403.97	9.09	60,000	367.50	6.62
90,000	617.59	14.14	90,000	569.96	10.32
Alliance & Leicester					
30,000	194.48	4.12	30,000	195.50	3.90
60,000	402.46	9.11	60,000	395.40	8.60
90,000	616.79	14.16	90,000	604.20	13.40

Coventry rate for borrowers of five years' standing

ality have pledged to keep savings rates up where possible. Bournemouth-based Portman Building Society was yesterday warning savers to lock into fixed rates quickly before savings rates dive.

The Portman Fixed Interest Bond remains open, for the time being at least, for savers with at least £500 to invest for a year. It pays 6 per cent gross, 4.5 per cent net. Similarly, Northern Rock is paying 7.5 per cent fixed on £2,500 invested until June 1999.

But both borrowers and savers might be advised to wait a few days before committing themselves to long-term investments or loans at fixed rates, because it was by no means clear yesterday which way the rates on these products will move.

While some lenders put their fixed-rate loans under immediate review, both the Halifax and Abbey were sceptical whether fixed mortgage costs would fall further. A

Halifax spokesman said: "The indications are that longer-term rates may rise following this latest base rate fall, which means that there may be little scope for fixed-rate mortgages to be cut."

Despite these reservations, competitive pressures are likely to push fixed-rate loans down to meet demand, because they are popular with customers. The best five-year fixed rates are currently above 7.25 per cent — well over the basic variable rate.

Giving customers what they want is crucial for keeping the housing market moving. The Halifax acted rapidly to bring rates down after the Chancellor's cut, in an effort to stoke up activity, which remains weak despite last month's annual house price rise of 4.6 per cent.

Fears are growing that last month's encouraging news on prices could prove a trap which might easily be reversed if prices fall in the

second half of the year, as they have for the past two years. Black Horse Agencies agrees with the Halifax that home owners need some additional incentives to move, after conducting a survey which shows serious shortages of houses in some areas.

Its estate agents found that 65 per cent of buyers have no property to sell, but 75 per cent of them are not first-time buyers. This is leading to a shortage of three- and four-bedroom houses.

The house price recovery in London has been patchy, according to the Inland Revenue, but houses in Tower Hamlets, Kensington, and Camden are selling for more than their asking price. Greenwich and Lambeth, weighed down by high repossessions, remain depressed.

The improvement in outer London is also sporadic, with Bromley, Raling, Wimbledon, Harrow and Enfield all buoyant.

In the North, prices have fallen in Sunderland, Middlesbrough and Ulverston. In the North-west, only Crewe saw any improvement, with the markets in Salford, Southport and Rochdale weakening.

Valuers in Southampton, Guildford and Brighton reported rising prices in the South-east. But repossessions are keeping the market flat in Bedford, while Chelmsford saw an increase in people handing back the keys. Similarly, properties in St Albans are struggling to find buyers, unlike Colchester, Aylesbury, Portsmouth and Eastbourne, where transactions were up.

In the South-west, activity is still falling, while the Welsh market has remained static. East Anglia has been static, too, apart from Cambridge, where moves and values have been strong within the city.

Money Guardian is edited by Margaret Hughes



Numbers game... BT's reduction in charges will be in part offset by line rental increase

PHOTOGRAPH DAVID MANSSELL

Watchdogs sink teeth into household bills

Cliff Jones

HOUSEHOLD running costs are set to fall next year following pressure from two industry watchdogs. Telephone bills will come down by 4.5 per cent and gas bills will be almost £40 lower.

BT customers will save an estimated £125 million a year on their charges. But BT will recoup about £80 million when it increases line rental by 90p to £25.69 per quarter next year. Those most affected by the charges will be light users, who will find the new charges excessive if they make calls costing more than £12.69 and so do not qualify for a 50 per cent discount. Heavier users should study the myriad of BT tariffs carefully.

BT's PremierLine tariff has an annual fee of £24, entitling customers to a 15 per cent discount on all direct-dialled calls and 5 per cent off calls to mobile phones and premium-

rate lines. Customers who spend more than £40 per quarter will break even. For every £10 on a PremierLine bill, customers earn one "Talking Point" which can be exchanged for air miles.

Option 15 takes 10 per cent off all direct-dialled calls and 5 per cent off calls to mobiles and premium-rate lines. Unlike PremierLine, which charges an annual fee, Option 15 has a running cost of 54 per quarter and a break-even point of £40 per quarter. BT's Friends and Family scheme gives 10 per cent off five numbers nominated by the caller.

BT is not the cheapest provider but emphasises that customers should study its many tariffs before deciding to switch to another service. BT customers can join Mercury's SmartCall service for a £5 quarterly fee and access the network by dialling 132. Mercury is cheaper for standard long-distance calls but BT's price can be reduced by various discount schemes. Mercury's local daytime rate is more than double that charged by BT.

Similar to Mercury is Dial 1602, which customers can join for a one-off £1 fee. The system is linked to the resident's standard BT phone.

Typical of cut-rate international call providers is First Telecom, which does require customers to maintain an account — in effect pre-paying for calls.

Ofgas, the gas industry regulator, said the price cut it announced this week still allows British Gas a profit margin of 1.6 per cent in the face of increased domestic competition.

Since April, half a million consumers in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset have been able to choose from nine suppliers. The competition is expected to bring down gas bills by an average £80 as rivals seek to undercut British Gas.

The complexity of this new competitive climate was highlighted yesterday by the disclosure that many people in the South-west had been overcharged by British Gas when they closed their accounts and moved to a new supplier.

● British Telecom: 150; Mercury: 0500 500 191; Dial 1602: 0171 757 7161; First Telecom: 0800 376 6666.

Tesco raises stakes in card game

Cliff Jones

TESCO will hold the 5 per cent interest rate on its revolutionary debit card despite Thursday's interest rate cut. The retailer said its "best buy" rate would not be reviewed until January 1997.

The Clubcard Plus payment card, launched on Monday, is linked to a Tesco deposit account which pays interest on credit balances. Customers can use their cards to make purchases or obtain cash at checkouts or from NatWest cash machines.

It will operate alongside the supermarket's existing loyalty programme which allows customers to collect points towards lower grocery bills.

The Tesco interest rate beats any UK low-balance instant-access account, but shoppers should remember that, despite the hype, this

is not a bank account. The rate is particularly attractive in the light of Thursday's base rate cut, which is expected to drag down bank savings rates further.

The Co-operative Bank pays 5 per cent gross interest on each pound in its Pathfinder instant-access account, but savers must open their account with £5,000 or set up a minimum of £100 in standing orders.

The interest rate on an "added value" account introduced this week by Barclays is just 0.3 per cent gross. The Additions account also charges a £5 monthly fee for which you get perks such as a free will-writing service and a 24-hour legal helpline.

Bradford & Bingley Building Society pays 0.25 per cent on its instant-access account and Lloyds Bank pays 1 per cent on its instant savings account. Even the best instant-access rate from the bigger banks,

Midland's Saver Plus, pays only 2 per cent gross. But the Tesco scheme cannot be operated as a conventional current account. The card, for now, is a limited method of payment and cardholders will not be issued with chequebooks.

The cards can be used for payment at B&Q do-it-yourself stores, which joined the Clubcard scheme in April. Payments into the Clubcard account must be by standing order. Shoppers are allowed a credit limit equal to the amount paid into the account from their standing order.

Tesco says the maximum credit limit is £5,000, but this is available only to people who pay in more than £80,000 a year.

Customers who use the card to obtain credit are charged interest at 9 per cent. This rate is much lower than those of other storecards such as that offered by Next, which

charges 25.9 per cent, or Marks & Spencer, at 24.8 per cent.

Safeway has said that it is looking at a direct payment card to operate alongside its ABC loyalty card. Sainsbury has not reacted, but announced earlier this year that it would launch its own loyalty card in the summer.

Alliance & Leicester has dropped the annual percentage rate on its Giro Visa card from 22.9 to 21.9 APR. The society has reduced the rate on its Atlantic Visa gold card from 18.9 to 17.9 APR but annual fees, £12 and £10 respectively, remain unchanged.

Cheshire Building Society has entered the credit card market with its own Mastercard. The card has no annual fee and charges 18.9 APR. The society is offering 13.9 APR for six months to existing cardholders who transfer their balance from another card issuer.

The right connections

Provider	Local Peak/ Off-peak	National Peak/ Off-peak	New York Peak/ Off-peak
BT	3.4p/1.4p	8.4p/5.0p	33.6p/32.2p
Mercury	7.45p/2.45p	6.4p/2.5p	28.1p/26.9p
Dial 1602	8.0p/2.9p	6.9p/4.0p	23.5p/22.5p
First Telecom	—	—	14.0p/10.0p

All prices exclude VAT. Table does not take into account BT savings schemes.

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SCOTTISH WIDOWS

Strong US jobs growth raises inflation fears and intensifies doubts about prudence of Clarke's decision

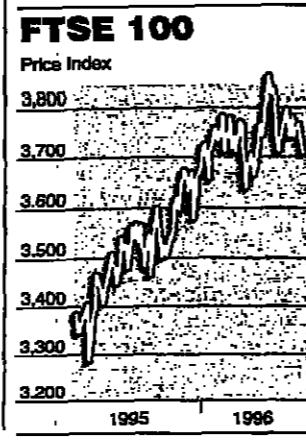
City pours scorn on rate cut

Paul Murphy in London and Mark Tran in New York

THE City yesterday blew a loud raspberry at Thursday's move by the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, to cut a further quarter-point of interest rates — seizing instead on evidence from across the Atlantic that interest rates around the world will rise again soon.

sending tremors through the financial markets across the world. In the US, the benchmark 30-year bond fell more than two points, sending the yield above 7 per cent. Worries that the Federal Reserve will be forced to put up American interest rates quickly spread to the stock market in New York, where the main US index, the Dow Jones Industrial Average, fell more than 80 points in early trading.

news that almost 560,000 new jobs were created in May — double analysts' predictions — while the US government



also revised April's job creation figure sharply higher, from 2,000 to 163,000. While the Dow Jones later clawed back some of its losses as curbs on computer trading were introduced in New York, analysts in London were warning that a spate of British economic statistics due to be published next week will be scoured for any evidence of inflationary pressure.

on July 2 to consider monetary policy and a debate is underway over whether the Fed chairman, Alan Greenspan, will move immediately to raise rates from their current level of 5 1/2 per cent, rather than waiting until later in the summer and risking a clash with the US presidential elections.

ation and agreed with Mr Clinton's assessment that there is little evidence of inflation. "This is a healthy report, with healthy jobs growth although we know the Fed will interpret this as raising the danger of inflation," said Peter Kretzmer, economist with NationsBanc Capital Markets. "We don't see in other numbers the beginnings of inflation."

Notebook

Wall Street ritual creates new peril



Mark Milner

STOCK and bond market reaction to the release of monthly employment data from the US is fast assuming a ritual air. The Labor Department figures show the American economy creating more jobs than the economic analysts expected, leading to warnings about inflationary pressure which, the forecasters predict, the Federal Reserve will head off by increasing interest rates.

price since BBA decided to scratch, before coming under starter's orders as it were, shows that quite a few expectations have been dashed. One consequence of the collapse of BBA's bid ambitions is that Lucas's own strategy — a merger with the US group Varsity — might not now receive the scrutiny it would have faced in a takeover scrap.

There is no doubt that in terms of size the deal will put Lucas/Varsity comfortably towards the top end of the motor components groups which are expected to dominate the industry. Size alone will not be enough. The question will be whether the two will be more than the sum of their parts.

Making a mark

HE who pays the piper calls the tune, but some of those involved in the European monetary union appear in grave danger of forgetting it.

Take yesterday, for example. A senior Italian treasury official argued that the new European central bank, to be created as an integral part of European monetary union, should have an obligation to intervene on the foreign exchange markets to protect those EU currencies which had not signed up for the single currency.

Beyond BBA

BBA's announcement that it will not be making a bid for Lucas has left the company looking red-faced.

Officially, BBA is saying that it decided not to go ahead with an offer because it had not been able to persuade sufficient Lucas shareholders to give their backing.

Clearly, however, BBA was also having to face disquiet from some of its own institutional shareholders.

That is not too surprising. Shareholders were entitled to have doubts about just how much industrial logic there would have been in BBA acquiring Lucas. They were entitled to feel disquiet about how much new paper and/or debt would have been required to finance the purchase of Lucas which, after all, has a significantly larger market capitalisation than the would-be bidder.

The fall in the Lucas share

Biggest diamond mine quits De Beers

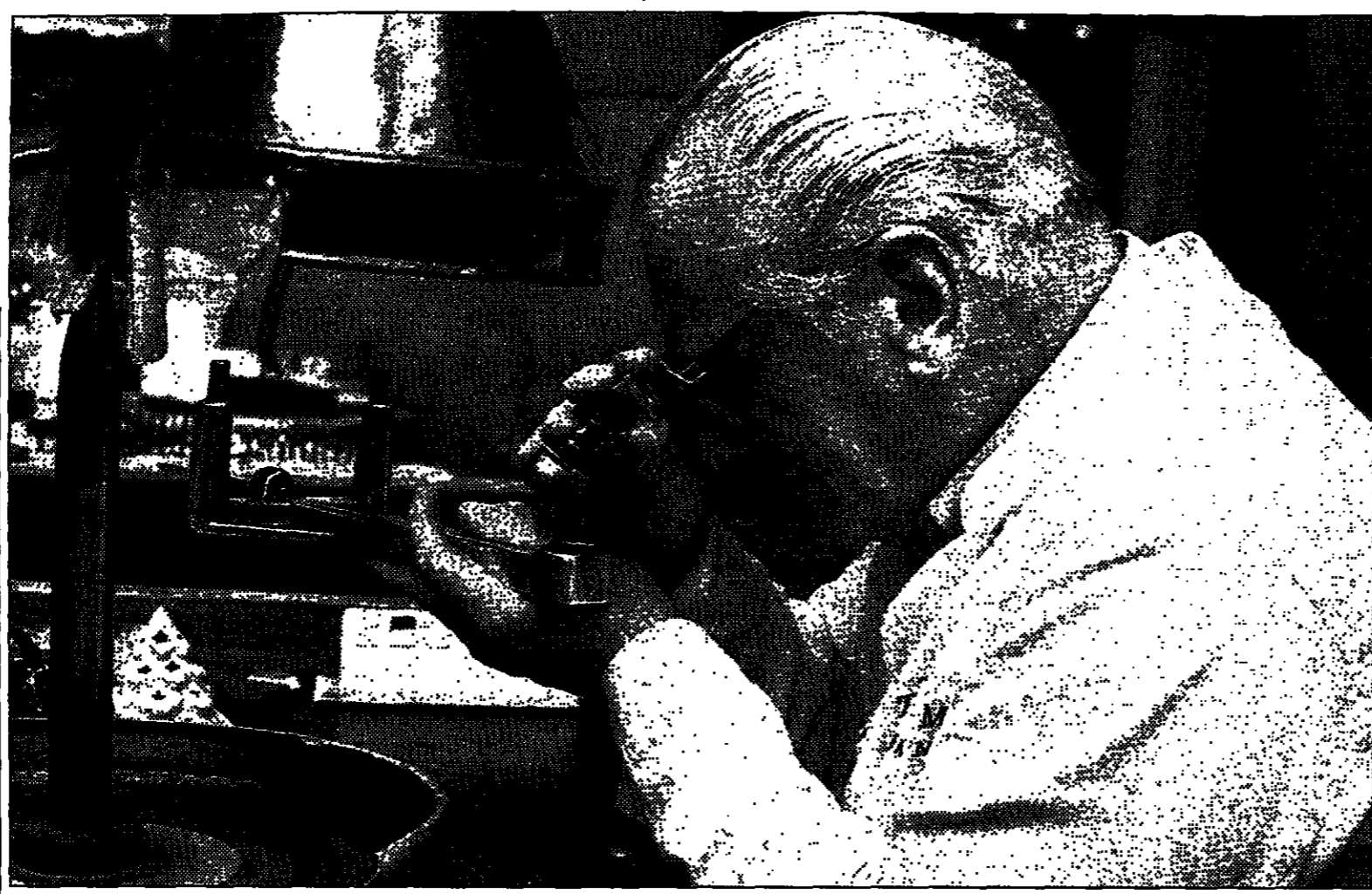
Dan Atkinson

THE world's biggest diamond mine yesterday pulled out of the De Beers gemstone cartel after months of bickering over prices and quotas. But the South African giant took the news calmly and insisted its international marketing grip would not be significantly weakened.

Argyle — whose biggest shareholder is Britain's RTZ, the world's largest mining house — will now sell its diamonds direct through its Antwerp office, cutting out De Beers's Central Selling Organisation (CSO), based at Hatton Garden, London.

A CSO spokesman said De Beers was "disappointed, naturally" but "not surprised". The 66-year-old cartel, he said, would not be damaged seriously by Argyle's decision, nor was there any question of a "falling-out" between De Beers and RTZ.

At the end of the day, he said, the CSO had not been able to give Argyle what it wanted, in terms of higher prices and increased sales, and Argyle had been unable to satisfy De Beers's desire to stabilise the market.



Sparkle dims... De Beers' decision to 'rebalance' diamond prices has hit Argyle, which mines mainly cheaper gems

The diamond business has just 25.50 a carat, against the 225 a carat produced by some De Beers mines in Botswana.

Half Argyle's output is used for industrial purposes, and the other half features mainly in the cheapest types of jewellery.

The CSO rejected suggestions that the pull-out could jeopardise the deal, signed on February 23 after tortuous negotiations, that kept Russia within the cartel.

count for 76 per cent by value of world production. Argyle accounts for 6 per cent. Its current CSO contracts run to the end of the month, after which it will not be renewed.

prices for cheaper stones by its own high production levels. It opened in 1983 to produce 50 million carats a year, and now produces about 40 million.

Liquidators sue auditors over Leeson

Writs for more than £450m have been issued over Barings losses, says NICK CUMMING-BRUCE

THE liquidators of rogue trader Nick Leeson's Baring Futures (Singapore) operation are suing the auditors Deloitte & Touche and Coopers & Lybrand for "well over" \$700 million (£450 million), alleging negligence over their failure to expose the losses that eventually brought down Barings Bank.

In the first of two suits served at the start of the week, liquidators Price Waterhouse seek to pin liability for losses run up by Mr Leeson in 1992 and 1993 on Deloitte, which carried out external audits of BBS in those years.

A second action over 1994 losses, understood to amount to about 65 per cent of the total Price Waterhouse is seeking from the two companies, cites Deloitte and Coopers & Lybrand, which conducted the external audit for that year.

BBA forced to drop Lucas bid plans

Sarah Whitbloom

SHAREHOLDER opposition yesterday forced BBA, the engineering group, to drop plans to bid for Lucas just two days after declaring an interest in acquiring the automotive components firm.

The company announced that it would not be launching a bid without the consent of the Lucas board, which has already agreed to a merger with the American Varsity Corporation.

The news followed mounting opposition in the City to BBA's bid hopes. A number of fund managers, who control

large shareholdings in BBA, were opposed to a counterbid by the firm and argued furiously that the idea should be dropped. Several shareholders, led by Robert Fleming, spoke publicly against the planned £2.5 billion offer — an extremely rare event in the highly secretive City.

Even before BBA's announcement, Lucas's share price was on the slide and BBA had started to climb. They closed the day at 239p and 303p respectively.

BBA claimed it had dropped its plans because the price it would have had to pay for Lucas had risen along with the company's share price. BBA said: "We've withdrawn, or backed off for the moment, not because of a lack of industrial logic in the deal but because we don't think there is value there for us."

"BBA has not been able to satisfy itself that Lucas's shareholders would accept an alternative proposal to a merger of Lucas and Varsity Corporation on terms which would be in the interests of BBA's shareholders."

Amicable returns £100m to tax-shelter investors

Cliff Jones

SCOTTISH Amicable has been forced by the Inland Revenue to hand back more than £100 million to 30,000 investors after its latest scheme for sheltering tax was declared illegal.

The Scottish fund manager said the Revenue's decision not to grant tax-free status to a trust to be launched later this month was "geared to create as much disruption as possible". A further estimated £50 million is being held by independent financial advisers who expected the trust to be blackballed.

The Revenue decided to close a loophole in the tax regulations which allowed investors to shelter £50,000 from income tax, and was on course to raise its target of £240 million.

Michael Jack, financial secretary to the Treasury, said that the Government had "no alternative but to introduce an amendment to the tax regulations with immediate effect to prevent particular arrangements under which investors

might circumvent the 55,000 annual subscription limit for the trust set by Parliament.

The Amicable's trust was to invest the £50,000 allowance in the Pep and a further £44,000 in a split-level investment trust, the income from which would be held in a separate portfolio.

Scottish Amicable, which manages £1.1 billion, will refund investors' money later this month with the offer of a 2 per cent discount for those investing refunded money in its unit trusts and Peps.

However, many investors will have lost hundreds of pounds in interest on their savings after cashing in other investments with the promise of sheltering £50,000 from the tax man.

Scottish Amicable last night would not comment on the setback but will detail the size of the refund on Monday.

Gas bill rip-offs

Customers in competition trials overcharged, reports CHRIS BARRIE

GAS customers in the south-west of England have been charged "hundreds of pounds" for gas they never used, it emerged yesterday.

As British Gas launched an inquiry into more than 70 cases of overcharging, the Gas Consumers' Council (GCC) said that people had been charged amounts "greatly in excess" of the cost of gas they had used.

With 53 consumers complaining to the GCC and "many more" direct to British Gas, council director Ian Powe accused the company of relying on "untried systems as justification for taking money out of customers' bank accounts".

The overcharging occurred when consumers in the south-west switched suppliers. The meter-reading trials ahead of full competition in supply in 1998, has seen some 40,000 consumers quit British Gas Trading (BGT), the supply arm, for rival suppliers.

Under a pre-trials agreement, BGT bills customers on the basis of information received from a meter-reading carried out at the best of its competitor. That information is sent to BGT via TransCo, its pipeline and transportation division.

There were conflicting reports yesterday of where the inaccuracies were taking place, with accusations and counter accusations between suppliers and TransCo.

Compounding the problem, it appeared that money had been removed via direct debit from customer accounts without warning as a result. British Gas has told the industry regulator Ofgas that it is taking steps to stop the problem. But Labour consumer affairs spokesman Nigel Griffiths warned that British Gas "should not be allowed to experiment with customers' money".

News in brief

Boardroom clearout

Double the number of boardroom bans were made against unit directors of companies in the first three months of this year than in 1995, the Department of Trade announced yesterday.

More than 200 were barred from serving on boards — taking the total number disqualified over 3,000. In the year to the end of March, a record 77 directors were deemed unfit, compared with 382 in 1995.

Alders goes Swiss

Alders announced yesterday that it is to sell its duty-free operations to Swissair for £160 million, bringing to an end weeks of uncertainty which began with an offer from airport operator BAA. The sale depends on Alders shareholders voting against the BAA offer, which is worth only £145 million, at a meeting on Monday.

Hiltons for China

Ladbroke's Hilton International hotel chain has started an expansion in China which will see it run as many as 20 five-star hotels there

Confidence builder

Building firm Taylor Woodrow yesterday said it saw early signs of confidence returning to the housing market, although margins were very tight and left little room for error.

Unhappy Spring

Spring Ram, the home improvements group, issued its fifth profit warning in three years yesterday. It said results for the first half of the year "will fall well short of the 1995 comparison" where profits reached £900,000. As a result, £3.4 million was wiped off the group's market value.

Tesco sales up 7pc

Tesco chairman Sir Ian MacLaurin told shareholders at the annual meeting that sales were 7 per cent up on last year, excluding business in new stores. Total sales were 13 per cent higher than last year. Sir Ian said petrol profits were still suffering from the price war but the losses were compensated for elsewhere.

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Austria 16.12	Germany 2.260	Malta 0.5450	South Africa 6.52
Belgium 47.04	Greece 384.00	Netherlands 2.9550	Spain 193.75
Canada 2.0575	Hong Kong 11.85	New Zealand 2.2450	Sweden 11.04
Cyprus 0.7050	India 58.83	Norway 5.85	Switzerland 1.929
Denmark 6.58	Ireland 0.9475	Portugal 238.00	Turkey 117.267
Finland 5.04	Israel 5.04	Saudi Arabia 5.76	USA 1.100

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IRI signals refusal to refuel Alitalia's huge debt engine

JOHN GLOVER in Milan says the state holding company has folded under union pressure — this time it's taking a hard line

IRI, Italy's huge state holding company, this week served notice that a solution to the crisis at national carrier Alitalia must be found fast. The airline is in a tailspin largely because its poisonous industrial relations have prevented action to stem its mounting losses. In the past, IRI, which owns 89.3 per cent of Alitalia's shares, has always buckled under when faced with union pressure at the airline. Its current hard line towards its off-spring clearly has top-level political backing. Romano Prodi, the new prime minister, is a veteran of two stints as president of IRI. His closest advisor is on leave from his job as director general of the holding company. Moreover, as Italy's most important state holding company, important decisions are made jointly with IRI's owner, the treasury. This is run by ex-premier Carlo Ciampi.

landing would have unpleasant implications for its final owner, the country's first left-wing government in five decades, not least by exposing the cracks in the fragile coalition that sustains it. But neither can the government continue to throw good taxpayers' money after bad. Alitalia is bleeding cash. The deficit it racked up in the 15 months to the end of March this year totals over 900 billion lire, which will reduce its capital stock to less than 150 billion lire. The company also has debts of over 3.5 trillion lire and is expected to lose some 400 billion lire this year. Under Italian law, shareholders must now either fork out more cash to bring its ratios up to at least the legal minimum, or they can set a course for the bankruptcy tribunal. IRI's move is clearly a warning shot. A note issued by the holding company stated that until the company's unions had agreed to the restructuring plan presented by chief executive Domenico Campella, it was postponing any decision over pumping in new cash. The five-year plan calls for costs to be slashed by around 500 billion lire, job cuts of some 3,000 and for a major reorganisation of the company's operations. This includes setting up two new low cost

carriers, one for short-to-medium range flights, one for long range trips. The plan was open to negotiation by the unions. Mr Campella said, on everything except its impact on the bottom line, the speed of its implementation and its shape. It was promptly rejected. The powerful pilots' unions, which were behind the trips in the ejector seat taken by Mr Campella's predecessors, reacted to news of IRI's warning by stressing the importance of employee involvement in the company. They are hoping to parlay a secret wage rise agreed on last year — which present management has refused to honour — into stock in the company. They are also preparing an alternative plan under which the cost savings will go into a special fund to be used to buy shares for employees when the company is eventually privatised. Unions representing other staff instead called IRI's decision "grave, unthinkable, blackmail". They are hoping to persuade the pilots to sign up to their own alternative plan. They all hope to keep the company in one piece. What is clear is that Prodi, Ciampi and their advisers all know how the system works and they all know the propensity of the IRI group to conduct its industrial relations through endless talk. They also know — and they hope the unions know — that Alitalia's last chance to keep flying is the reconvened meeting at the end of June.

Helena Smith rattles around in Tirana's cavernous Albanian bourse



Nice work... Moneychangers outside the Albanian national bank in Tirana. The government wants them inside as forex dealers. PHOTOGRAPH: MELANIE FRIEND

So quiet, you could hear a share drop

THE Albanian stock exchange is a very quiet place. So quiet, it is hard to know if it is actually open or closed.

But for the 10 brokers who attend its twice-weekly sessions in the cavernous grand hall of Tirana's slow-paced central bank, the Albanian bourse is a very real thing.

Its inauguration, last month, marked an "historic moment" for the country in the words of the euphoric president, Sali Berisha.

Opened just five weeks before the former Stalinist state's third multi-party poll, the conservative leader hailed it as the "crowning glory" of his struggle to imbue Europe's poorest economy with a touch of the West.

Yet for all the official enthusiasm, Albanians have quickly discovered that operating a stock exchange is far from easy. As Elvin Meka, the bourse's

market sector chief concedes, the world of fast-moving prices can be an elusive one. "As we've very little experience of a market economy, we've found ourselves facing a lot of practical difficulties", he says after a particularly gruelling morning on the trading floor.

forced to end the session in the midst of a heated debate over whether interest rates on treasury bills were also tradeable. "It was typical of the kind of procedural problem we so often encounter," he sighs. "But very soon we hope to be dealing in foreign exchange as well".

Arben Papajorgji, a young, fresh-faced trader quickly points out, has "never worked". Despite its apparent drawbacks, the ruling Democrats hope the bourse will take off sufficiently to lure in the hordes of foreign currency dealers milling outside the bank.

the exchange they hope to clamp down on the illegal trade. So far, two — a former factory worker and a policeman — have been officially licensed, but hundreds more would like to follow suit. Although dealers say street trading is a lucrative business — most make \$800 (\$533) a month compared to the average public sector salary of \$60 — many believe the bourse would offer them extra security.

Ten brokers — representing five banks, two insurers and three individuals — sit patiently at two telephones

polka-dotted tie and a pencil moustache, spends much of his time shouting figures from two large blackboards in the chamber. The dealers are currently limited to bidding on treasury bills and privatisation vouchers, although the government hopes companies will also start listing shares later this month. Last Monday, Mr Meka was

out of the remnants of the Ottoman Empire in 1913, has never had a bourse before. For the moment its 10 brokers — representing five banks, two insurance companies and three individuals — sit patiently behind three wooden tables and two telephones in the centre of the chamber. A set of gilt-edged clocks also grace the wall but one, as

Since the collapse of communism, the traders have become an everyday fixture on Tirana's pot-holed backstreets where they blatantly ignore authorities to operate a flourishing black market. With few capital market "experts", officials paradoxically now see the dealers as budding brokers. By moving them off the streets, and into

Peels of protest rise in idyll facing Parisian runways

Alex Duval Smith in Paris

MOURNFUL church bells toll in Beauvilliers today as villagers protest against a decision to drive the runways of Paris's third international airport through their rural idyll. Chosen to absorb future overflow air traffic from Orly and Charles de Gaulle airports, this village 80km south-west of Paris has alienated local centralised French planning policy. Its mayor, Georges Lhermitte, claims the 200 residents were not consulted. He said: "The govern-

ment appointed a commission to study three sites — Beauvilliers, another north of Paris and one in Normandy. Without waiting for the commission to begin local consultation, the government has made the announcement." The government's spokesman, Alain Lamassoure, said Beauvilliers was chosen for its low population density and because the environmental impact would be minimal. He said any airport would not come into operation until 2015 at the earliest, adding: "The time has not yet come to make the pro-

ject a reality. It is a matter of setting aside the necessary land." The government believes Beauvilliers would be the best site because fewer than 100 houses would be demolished and fewer than 4,000 people would suffer noise. Chartres, 20 kilometres away, would enjoy an influx of industry and tourism. Mr Lhermitte fears being engulfed in the "suburbanisation" of Paris, the European Union's fastest-growing city. He said: "Forty per cent of the population of Eure-et-Loire (the local département) has come here to escape city life."

Small investors take on Eurotunnel by proxy

Mark Mitter European Business Editor

SOPHIE L'Hélias, a Paris-based professional investors' representative, is wooing Eurotunnel's British shareholders as part of a campaign designed to give small investors more say in the company's talks with its bankers over restructuring its massive debt burden. Ms L'Hélias has been brought in by the two associations representing small shareholders in France to represent them at the annual meeting later this month. Her aim is to collect enough proxy votes from small shareholders to give them a say in the restructuring plan under negotiation. The banks are owed about £8 billion. "Many (shareholders) believe that we have a say in the plan. We don't, at least not yet. However, we do have the power to create leverage vis-à-vis the management and vis-à-vis the banks." Ms L'Hélias' strategy is to collect proxies from shareholders who would allow her to vote their shares at the annual meeting demonstrating the strength of small shareholders ahead of the special meeting that will have to be convened to approve any restructuring plan. "The point is not to disrupt negotiations, but to get the best possible terms for shareholders," she says. Ms L'Hélias, whose usual role is as a representative of institutional investors in French companies, stresses

Heard the Polish joke about the gold rush?

Arthur Morika in Zlotoryja

TWO years ago Zlotoryja could have been called a ghost town. Now, though unemployment is still around 24 per cent, it is trying to build a tourist industry on the back of an unlikely prospect. The secret is the name. Zlotoryja is Polish for "place for digging for gold". Not that the town, population 20,000, is sitting on Klondike-sized deposits of the precious metal. Indeed, the area's only workable metal deposit is the rather less glamorous copper and the nearby copper mine, at Legnica, provides the bulk of the jobs in the area. No one can remember exactly who dreamt up the idea of the idea of exploiting the name by running an annual gold-panning competition. But now 2,000 tourists from across Europe turn up for the early summer contest. Participants stand in a cold lake and try to find five small pieces of gold added by the jurors into 20 kilograms of sand. Competitors use the methods of the California gold rush. They place sand into a pan, submerge it under water, and carefully shake and tilt the contents. Professionals can find all the pieces in less than two minutes. Others spend more than 20 minutes unable to find anything. Tourists who come to the city to take part or just to watch the gold festival are spending money. During this year's contest, for the first time in years, the only hotel in town had no vacancies.

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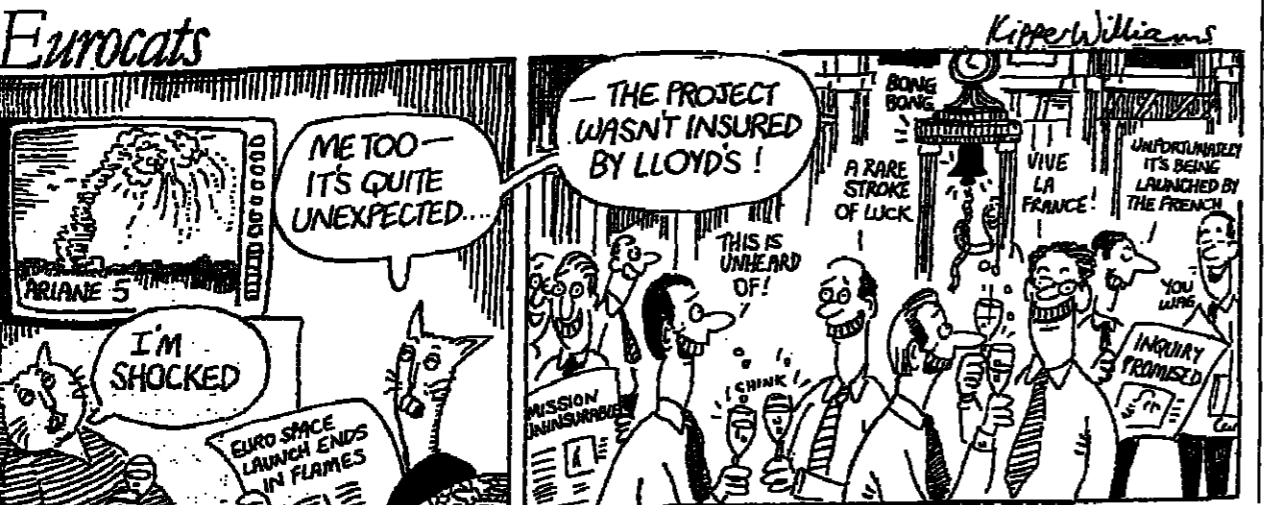
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Finance Guardian

Republican contender is being pushed by advisers to ditch his economic principles, writes ALEX BRUMMER in Washington



Travelling light... Bob Dole boards plane on campaign trail. PHOTOGRAPH: ERIC DRAPER

We can cut taxes, reform the tax code and balance the budget

Bob Dole on the deficit he dubbed a stealth tax on Americans

We have the first investment-led, low-inflation expansion since John Kennedy was President. Our history is that expansions end when inflation moves out of control. But, at present, we have low inflation and capacity rising rapidly

Lawrence Summers, deputy treasury secretary

We can't afford to go the voodoo economics route again

Martin Baily, White House economic adviser

The last temptation of Bob Dole

IT WAS a typical Bob Dole moment. Speaking at a rally in the heartland of car country at Warren, Michigan, the Republican presidential candidate acidly quipped: "I can't tell you how glad I am to be able to make this speech before President Clinton got a copy of it and delivered it himself." This was not the inspirational stuff which American citizens have come to expect of their leaders but reflects the reality of the 1996 race for the White House as run by the introspective Mr Dole.

Each time his campaign comes up with a bright idea — such as going national with the tough Wisconsin plan to force the dispossessed off welfare — he is preempted by President Clinton. No sooner had Mr Dole this week outlined his new belief that "we can cut taxes, reform the tax code and balance the budget" than the President was on his feet at the Princeton graduation ceremonies proposing his own tax breaks, in the shape of a \$7.9 billion (\$5.3 billion) plan to assist those in higher education. The Clinton move was another deliberate spoiler proposed by the President's political advisers (but opposed by the US Treasury) designed to burnish his tar-

nished credentials as a supporter of lower taxes. Mr Dole has never been a great believer in the art of supply-side, tax-cutting economics. His dirt-poor upbringing in the small town of Russell, Kansas, where friends and neighbours were driven to early graves by the burden of debt, triggered his lifelong allergy to deficit financing. Throughout 12 years of the Reagan/Bush administrations, Mr Dole — as a leading light in the Senate — never hid his disdain for what he regarded as profligacy in the public finances. In his final act, before leaving the US Senate this week, the departing majority leader forced a vote on an amendment to balance the budget. And he used a campaign speech to suggest that the deficit was, in effect, a "stealth tax" which, through the interest charges on the national debt, was costing the average working family \$36,000 extra on their mortgage; \$1,400 more for their student loan and \$700 on their car loans. "These are not the words of a Republican who would be easily persuaded by the tax-cutting nostrum."

But Mr Dole — who is trailing his Democratic opponent by 17 points in the opinion polls — has a huge problem. The election economy appears all but perfect. "As a macro proposition, the economy is in the best shape for 30 years," says the deputy treasury secretary, Lawrence Summers, relaxing on a sofa in his airy office in the US Treasury building adjacent to the White House. "We have the first investment led, low inflation expansion since John Kennedy was President. Our history is that expansions end when inflation moves out of control. But, at present, we have low inflation and capacity rising rapidly," he adds. As one of the most senior members of the Clinton economic team, albeit one with brilliant academic credentials, Summers is not simply beating the drum, the data speaks for itself. The US unemployment rate, at 5.6 per cent, is far below the 6 per cent mark most economists regard as the natural level of full employment. Since August 1993, 7 million jobs have been created. Inflation is well below the 3 per cent mark. The budget deficit has been cut in half to \$150 billion, to where it represents 1.7 per cent of gross domestic product, against 4.9 per cent when Clinton took over. And the Dow Jones has soared 76 per cent — enriching a broad group of American savers.

On the global economic front, a combination of words and co-ordinated action among the G7 has lifted the value of the dollar, bond yields have been ratcheted downwards, Mexico has been rescued from near disaster and the Nafta and World Trade Organisation treaties have been ratified. It is against this formidable statistical backdrop that Mr Dole must make the case that it is he, rather than President Clinton, who is better qualified to nurture economic expansion. He is, of course, not entirely without weapons. PUTTING aside the character issues, which are certain to be part of the Dole armoury, there are a number of more subtle economic trends into which Mr Dole may seek to tap. Although unemployment is low, concern about job insecurity remains high, as symbolised by the current strike at planemaker McDonnell Douglas, where workers are demanding greater certainty. The present growth rate of 2.2 per cent, in the first quarter, is significantly below where it has been historically, productivity is disappointing and real incomes, for most Americans, have been flat. In addition, no political leader, including the President, has had the courage to tackle the potentially imploding finances of an over-generous social security system. Early last month, in an effort to put some intellectual punch into a campaign going

nowhere, Mr Dole took the first steps towards forming a "brain" trust of economists to direct him away from his obsession with balanced budgets towards a more broadly based policy that addressed some of the longer-term weaknesses in the economy. The six wise men — pointy heads as some commentators unkindly called them — were brought together in the Capitol conference room, under the auspices of Senate budget committee chairman Pete Domenici, where they offered their views as they munched on chicken and ribs from a fashionable Washington barbecue eatery. It was an eclectic group, which included the Nobel prize-winning economist Gary Becker, who has taken over Professor Milton Friedman's seat at the University of Chicago; Harvard's Martin Feldstein, who served as chairman of President Reagan's Council of Economic Advisers; John Lipsky, the tall, thoughtful, market economist at Salomon Brothers and Professor John Taylor of Stanford University, the informal chairman and notetaker of the group. What was remarkable, given the different backgrounds of the economists present, was the degree of consensus among them on what is needed to spur further growth. "We were basically a bunch of economists all heading in the same direction," said Mr Lipsky, speaking from his

cherry-wood panelled office high up in New York's World Trade Centre. The themes, which focused on tax reform, were not shocking, he observes. "What would have been radical is if we had considered the current tax system a model of efficiency and logic," he argues. What emerged, according to another participant, Mr Feldstein, was a "menu of options" from which the Republican candidate, working with his political advisers, could choose. The remarkable aspect from Mr Dole's point of view is that all the ideas were tax related. Among the most radical discussed was wholesale tax reform, which would move the US to a more European model in which direct taxes on income were partly replaced by a consumer tax, such as value added tax. This was seen as a valid approach, in an economy in which the taxes on capital (such as double taxation of corporations) are among the highest in the Western world. But it was considered too contentious for the voters in 1996, though it may form part of a future Republican programme. The group, instead, came up with a more conventional set of ideas. These included:

- Income tax cuts, not dissimilar to President Reagan's historic move in 1982. It was argued that this would compensate workers for slow wage growth in recent years.
- Reducing capital gains taxes, or indexing them to inflation, to lower the cost of capital and stimulate private investment — one of the most serious longer-term deficiencies of the US economy.
- The creation of "personal security savings accounts", similar to UK Peps, to allow individuals to shelter savings from tax, without having to wait for retirement to enjoy them.
- Additional tax-free accounts to allow Americans to save money, tax-free, for education expenses and medical care. This may be accompanied by matching federal funds for those on lower incomes who take this route.
- A tax incentive for families by excluding from taxation part of the income in households with two earners.
- Most of these ideas — with the exception of a switch to a consumption tax by the millennium — may seem unexceptional. But in the hands of Mr Dole, with his fixation on the balanced budget, they are potentially explosive, requiring a Pauline-style conversion to supply-side — renamed for these purposes — "growth economics". In language reminiscent of the Reagan era, those advising Mr Dole in favour of the programme believe it could be self-financing. EXTRA revenues of some \$80 billion a year could be generated, effectively wiping out the deficit, if the economy could be restored to trend US growth of 3.3 per cent, in the view of conservative economist Gary Robbins, of the Institute for Policy Innovation. Mr Robbins, an adviser to Capitol Hill Republicans, argues that slower growth since 1989 has cost citizens \$1,337 in income per year. So far, Mr Dole has not decided which of the reforms to back. But the Clinton team is already sharpening its stiletto. "We can't afford to go the voodoo economics route again," says White House economic adviser Martin Baily. "Dole has a history of being more responsible." But, as the struggle for Mr Dole's soul intensifies, with advisers urging him to put clear blue water between himself and President Clinton, deja-voodoo becomes a serious prospect.

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Six hardliners who tell the candidate what to think

IN ASSEMBLING his panel of six wise men, Bob Dole has sought to tap all shades of economic opinion. Unlike Ronald Reagan, whose economic views were inspired by a group of polemical supply-siders from relatively obscure academic backgrounds, the Dole group is far more conventional, drawing upon some of the most respected names in US economics and including people with practical business experience. The group has a strong monetarist tinge which suggests that Wall Street and the bond markets should have little to fear from a Dole presidency — should it ever happen. The six economists are: Gary Becker of the University of Chicago and the Hoover Institution, regarded as the leader of the Chicago School following Milton Friedman's retirement and the passing of leading conservative economist George Stigler. Mr Becker won the Nobel Prize for economics in 1992 for

his ground-breaking work on "human capital", applying the laws of economics to everything from education to the family. Martin Feldstein is best known in Washington for his quarrels inside the Reagan White House. While there, he exposed the unmentionable issues of tax increases and tackling the social security budget. In the broader world of economics, he is best known as president of the National Bureau of Economic Research at Harvard, which has been responsible for officially declaring when the US is in recession. Charles Wolfe is dean of Rand Graduate School and provides economic advice and analysis to his employer, Rand Corp. He is an expert on international economic comparisons. Dean Wolfe believes Senator Dole has the opportunity to lift the US growth rate to 3 per cent annually through tax and regulatory reforms. John Lipsky is chief economist at Salomon

Brothers in New York, having previously been based in London. Mr Lipsky believes that the Federal Reserve is taking a more cautious approach to economic developments in the US because of fears of overheating. John Taylor of Stanford has emerged as chairman of the six-person group. Like Mr Becker, he is seen as a monetary economist and is known for his strong Republican credentials. Ironically, he served on the Council of Economic Advisers under George Bush, a period which fellow Republicans like Bob Dole would sooner forget. Robert Barro of Harvard is one of the less likely members. He is known among economists for the theory of "rational expectations". This suggests that government attempts to manage the economy are doomed to failure. He believes that tax cuts should not be opposed simply because they increase the deficit.

Quick Crossword No. 8147

ADAMSAPPLE
U N I T I E
NATURAL EXACT
D I E V N H
ETCH INFINITE
R M Y O N O
RECTAR CUDDEL
E O R H S
AQUARIUM THUG
HATED BIRCHTA
E A U E C N
FRONTBENCH

Solution No. 8146

Across
1 Scrawl (8)
5 Pay attention (arch.) — or bend over (4)
9 Snowhouse (5)
10 Castle — a royal house (7)
11 Home base (12)
13 Day nursery (5)
14 Whiggle (5)
17 Insolence (12)
20 Sloth (7)
21 Experience — discrimination (5)
22 Abominable snowman (4)
23 Scripture (4,4)

Down
1 Miss — spring (4)
2 Free of duty (7)

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